LIFESTYLE / F1

WORLD / A28

Iran airs first photos of British troops seized in Persian Gulf last week

BUSINESS / B4

Meralco income hit P13B in '06

NEWS / A7

Saudi king, key US ally, hits Iraq occupation, calls on West to end embargo on Palestine

METRO / A23

Pasig shabu mart star witness reveals payoffs to cops

2 mayors suspended over lamppost scam

By Jocelyn R. Uy
in Manila
and Jolene R. Bulambot
Inquirer Visayas

THE OMBUDSMAN YESTERDAY SUSPENDED two mayors, and eight of their subordinates and nine top officials of the Department of Public Works and Highways, for their alleged involve-

2 MAYORS/ A6

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Friday, March 30, 2007 ★★ 13 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 112 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Alimony must continue even if Julia is now Julio

CLEARWATER, FLORIDA —A woman's sex-change operation does not free her ex-husband from his alimony obligation, a judge ruled on Wednesday.

Attorneys for

ALIMONY/ A6

USAPANG LALAKI NA DAPAT YAN!

Puno fumes over lapses

Sacks Manila police chief; two other PNP officers suspended

THE MAN WHO LOVED CHILDREN: Armando "Jun" Ducat is now behind bars at the Manila Police District headquarters. The Palace vows to throw the book at him and his aide, Caesar Carbonell, even as it warns the public against making him a hero. REUTERS

By Alcuin Papa

A LIVID INTERIOR SECretary Ronaldo Puno has ordered the relief of three Manila police commanders for lapses in procedure during the 10-hour hostage-taking of 26 children and four teachers on a bus the other day.

Puno also ordered the Philippine National Police to "throw the book" at hostage-taker Armando "Jun" Ducat and his aide Caesar Carbonell, saying they should be considered "terrorists" and "treated as such."

He said the administrative relief of Manila Police District chief Senior Supt. Danilo Abarzosa, MPD Station 5 head Supt. Rogelio Rosales and police precinct head Chief Insp. Bernardo Cubacub would be in effect pending the results of an inquiry by the PNP leadership into how the police handled the hostage situation.

It was Rosales whom Ducat, and reporters, saw laughing while the hostage-taker was railing about corruption in the government.

Because of Rosales' reaction, Ducat attempted to have the bus driven by Carbonell from the Manila City Hall to Makati.

"Frankly, I'm not very happy about the way these things were

PUNO FUMES/ A10

PRES. GLORIA PALAYAIN SI JUN DUCAT
Jun Ducat WE LOVE U PAROLA COM

HERO to the Musmos Daycare Center in Parola Compound in Tondo and their parents, they rally for their benefactor Ducat who was also the hostage-taker. EDWIN BACASMAS

Illegal detention, gun charges filed vs Ducat

By Tina G. Santos, Leila B. Salaverria and Dona Pazzibugan

THE MANILA POLICE DISTRICT yesterday filed charges of serious illegal detention and illegal possession of firearms and explosives against Armando Ducat Jr. and an alleged accomplice after they held 26 children hostage on a bus for nearly 10 hours on Wednesday.

Serious illegal detention is a nonbailable offense and punishable by up to 30 years.

But a police officer said Ducat had dud grenades with him. A member of the Manila Police District's Explosives Ordnance Division (EOD), said

ILLEGAL/ A8

PLAYTIME: President Arroyo makes up for the kids' aborted excursion to Tagaytay. On Thursday, she tours them through the Palace, serves them merienda and learns from her special little guests that a fun time was had by all during their 10-hour ordeal inside the hijacked bus. LYN RILLON

Was it a politician's publicity stunt?

By Christian V. Esguerra and Norman Bordadora

WAS IT A SINCERE DESIRE TO help or one politician's publicity stunt?

A day after he showed up at the daylong hostage drama involving 26 schoolchildren in Manila, Team Unity's Luis "Chavit" Singson came up with a press release praising himself for his role in ending the incident.

The 12-paragraph press release was e-mailed to at least 130 print and broadcast reporters, with the title, "Vote Luis 'Chavit' Singson for Senator."

"It takes guts and bravery to risk your own life to help rescue children caught in a hostage crisis," the release said.

It said the Ilocos Sur governor was "one of the few persons" allowed by hostage-taker Armando Ducat Jr. to enter the hijacked bus. Aside from Singson, administration Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. also made himself available for the negotiations.

Ducat eventually surrendered to Singson, ending a 10-hour standoff broadcast on local and international media.

While some people commended Singson, others criticized him for taking advantage of the incident for his ongoing senatorial campaign.

In a television interview yesterday, the Ilocos Sur governor said to his critics: *"Inggit lang sila* (They're just envious)."

The press release said Singson demonstrated "guts and bravery" in negotiating with Ducat for the release of the daycare pupils.

"When I was called to the site of the hostage-taking, I didn't think

WAS IT/ A8

Tagaytay trip ends in Palace fun

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

PLAYING TEACHER CUM PSYchiatrist to the children held hostage by their benefactor on Wednesday, President Macapagal-Arroyo got it straight from the mouths of babes: Their 10-hour bus ride was lots of fun.

And had the President asked the children's parents how they felt about Armando Ducat Jr., they would have told her the hostage-taker was their hero.

In fact, most of the parents are not thinking of pressing charges. They have nothing but praise for the man.

"We don't want him in jail. He was just doing what he thought was right and just for us, the poor," Mirabelle Moreno, whose 6-year-old son was among the hostages, said in Filipino.

The morning after the hostage drama that put the world spotlight on the Philippines, Ms Arroyo tried to make up for the aborted excursion to Tagaytay of

TAGAYTAY/ A8

PDI photog wins 2 Asia media awards

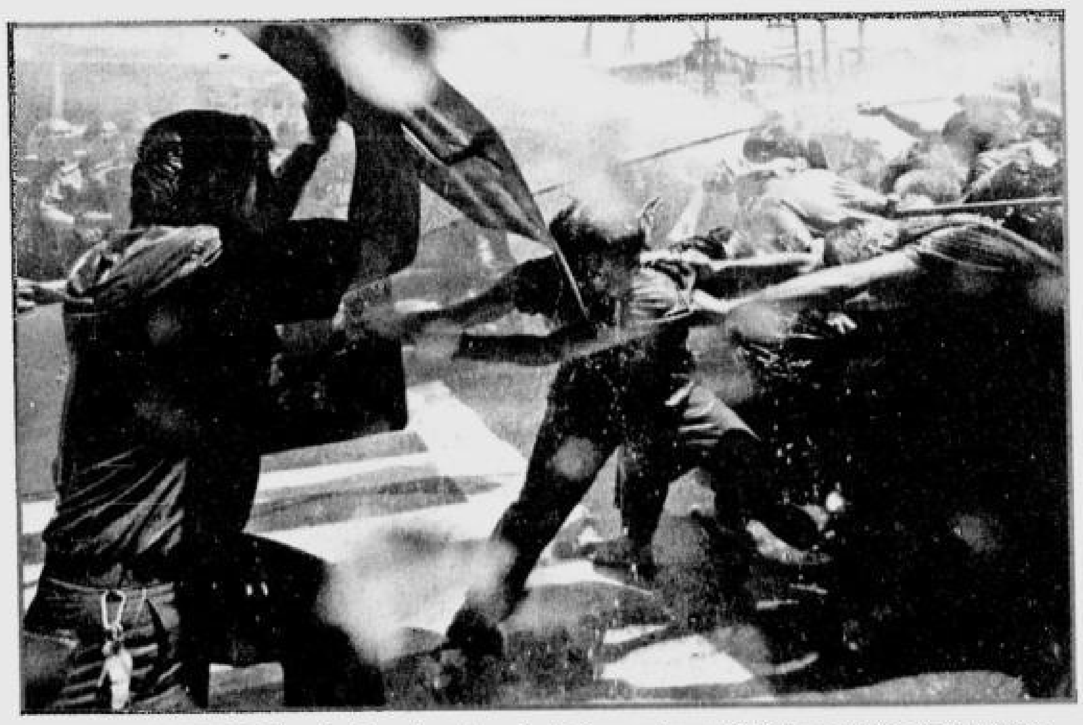
By Ernie U. Sarmiento
Chief Photographer

THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER'S Rem Zamora won two Best in Photojournalism awards during the 6th Asia Media Awards 2007 organized by Ifra, the world's leading association of newspaper and media publishing companies.

Zamora bagged the Newspaper Photographer of the Year award for his portfolio of eight to 15 photos of the landslide disaster in Guinsaugon, Leyte, in February 2006. The award was introduced for the first time this year.

Zamora's photo of the dispersal by police of protesting militant and peasant

PDI PHOTOG/ A12



SCULPTED IN TIME: The winning photo is a shot taken on June 9, 2006, near Mendiola Bridge during a rally dispersed by the police with water cannons. Militant and peasant groups staged the rally to protest the killing of leftists and the failure of the agrarian reform program. REM ZAMORA

'BALLOT SCAM'

3 NPO workers fired but never investigated

By Nikko Dizon

THE THREE EMPLOYEES OF THE National Printing Office caught copying the serial numbers of official ballots to be printed at the NPO had been fired by the office of NPO Director General Felipe Evardone even before the Commission on Elections could uncover the "motive" for what they were doing, an election commissioner yesterday said.

Evardone is the brother of Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, who is also Team Unity's media director.

The three casual employees were discovered copying the serial numbers of the ballots in early March by a Comelec supervisor.

"(The investigation) already became academic because the three casuals whom our supervisor and our own people discovered were already removed by the former director general of the NPO," Resurreccion Borra said at a press conference at the Comelec.

He said the Comelec had the names of the three casual employees.

Borra is the commissioner in charge of the printing of official ballots and other accountable election forms.

3 NATIONAL/ A6

EZ2
15 19

SIX DIGIT
1 2 1 3 0 6

SUERTRES
Mid-Day 6 5 8 | Evening 8 2 3
(All in exact order)

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies.

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Partly Cloudy

COMPILED BY: LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/03/29/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

BATTLE FOR HOUSE SEATS

GO likes prospects of GMA impeachment

By Norman Bordadora

THE GENUINE OPPOSITION's bid to pack the House of Representatives with lawmakers who will vote to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo appears to have taken a back seat to the need to ensure the victory of its senatorial candidates.

A partial, yet substantial, list of GO candidates for the House shows it is supporting the reelection of at least nine incumbent congressmen who had voted against impeaching the President in 2005 and again in 2006.

But only one of them—Makati Rep. Teodoro Locsin Jr.—is said to have committed to change his vote and support Ms Arroyo's impeachment in the next Congress.

"(Support for impeachment) is one of our guidelines but it is not an absolute requirement. Our main concern really is support for the senatorial lineup... but we would prefer that they vote for impeachment" Ernesto Maceda, a member of the executive council of the United Opposition (UNO), the coalition behind GO, said in a telephone interview.

"Anyway, we now have 155 congressional candidates. If half of them choose not to vote for impeachment, we'll still have the numbers to mount a successful impeachment," he said.

It takes one-third, or at least 78 votes, of the 234-member House to impeach a President.

GO plans to field 200 common congressional candidates from the ranks of its member-parties.

Reelectionist congressmen who voted against Ms Arroyo's impeachment but who have GO's support include Deputy Majority Leader Jesus Crispin Remulla and Representatives Proceso Alcala, Anna York Bondoc, Jaime Lopez, Antonio Diaz, Roque Ablan Jr., Arthur Pingoy and Arnulfo Fuentebella.

Locsin and UNO president Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay belong to PDP-Laban, a member-party of the opposition coalition. Locsin, however, is a member of the majority coalition in the House.

GO will also support opposition congressmen who did not vote in last year's impeachment proceedings but promised to do so if their votes would make a difference. They include Vincent Crisologo and Oscar Malapitan.

A known ally of the President's, former Transportation Secretary Pantaleon Alvarez, also has the support of GO in his bid to reclaim his seat in Davao del Norte.

Maceda said that in the course of coalition-building, there are instances when a local executive supported by GO coalesces with a congressional candidate belonging to the other side. This situation results in GO supporting a personality identified with the administration.

Under the setup, he said, the local and congressional coalitions will support six candidates apiece from GO and Team Unity.

One example is the case in Ilocos Norte where GO adopted Ablan since he was allied with the Marcoses. Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos is an active member of the opposition in the House.

Imee is said to be running for governor with GO's support while her brother, the incumbent governor, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr., will vie for her seat in the House.

"When Roquito learned we were adopting Bongbong, he also asked that we adopt him," Maceda said.

"(Under such a circumstance) we normally agree on a mixed ticket of six candidates coming each ticket being supported," he said.

No more Hello 'Garci' calls, poll exec hopes

By Leila B. Salaverria

THERE WILL BE NO MORE HELLO GARCI-type calls to any Commission of Elections official, at least not in secret, if a a proposal to record any calls made by politicians to the Comelec is adopted, said Commissioner Rene Sarmiento.

He said the proposal was made during a recent Philippine Election Forum that brought together representatives from government, the churches and non-government organizations.

Sarmiento mentioned the proposal when he was asked at a forum on Wednesday whether he believed there could be a repeat of the "Hello Garci" incident.

"I think it will not be repeated anymore. The commissioners are committed to clean elections," he said.

He said the proposal that calls from politicians to the Comelec would be recorded and carefully monitored was approved at the recent election forum.

Very open

But he said the Comelec en banc has yet to discuss it though he believes the commissioners would agree to adopt it.

"I think they'll be very open. We want to ensure clean and credible elections. This is part of it," he said.

The "Hello Garci" tapes contained purported wiretapped conversations of President Macapagal-Arroyo in which she allegedly called an unnamed election official to ask about her vote lead over her nearest rival.

Following calls demanding her resignation and impeachment, the President apologized for making the call but did not name the official, widely believed to be former Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano.

Sarmiento said that it was not enough for groups to keep on criticizing Garcillano. These groups should file charges against the former commissioner, he said.

"We have this presumption of innocence. Charges should have been filed... Part of our responsibility is to file criminal charges. We just don't attack or criticize, but we file criminal charges that we back up with evidence. I think for democracy to thrive, we should not only attack or criticize but file charges because we have processes to follow. Only then can we say democracy is alive," he said.

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño said the group continues to doubt the Comelec's capability to conduct clean and honest elections.

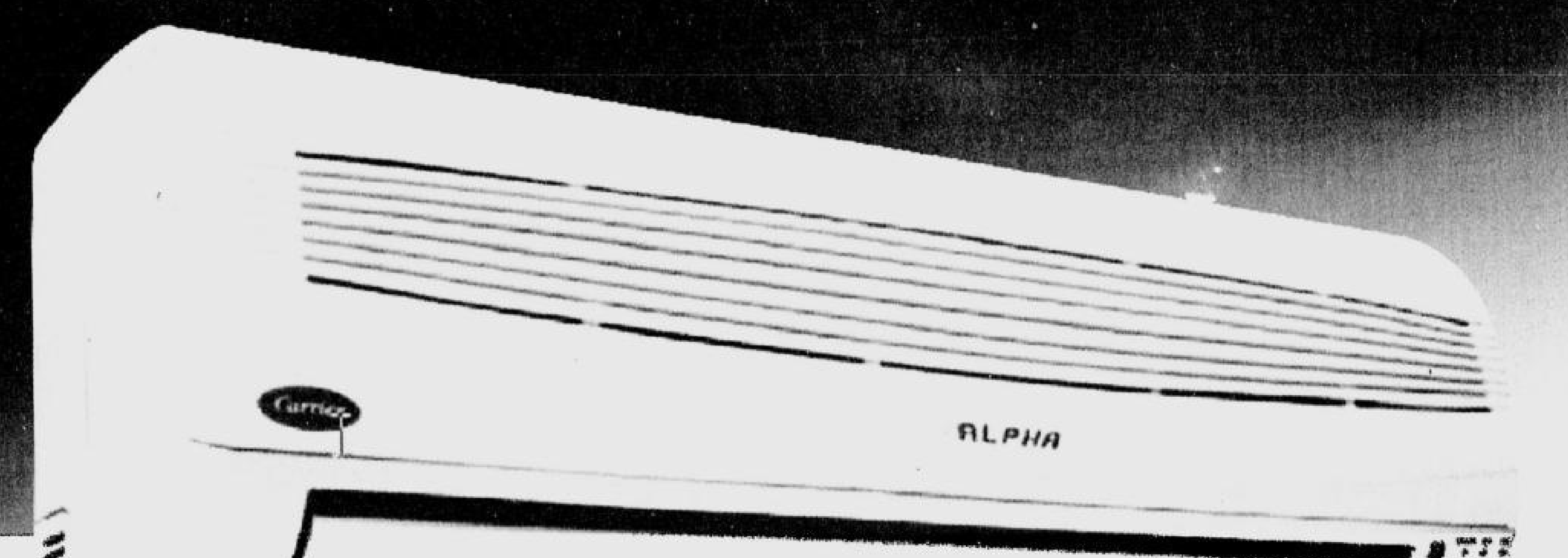
He said the "Hello Garci" issue has yet to be resolved and electoral reforms have not yet been implemented. He said Bayan Muna would do its part to help make the polls clean by sending watchers to the election precincts.

Turncoatism

Sarmiento also said Congress should pass a law against political turncoatism. He said that if there were such a law existed, former senator Tessie Aquino-Oreta would not have had a chance to make her tearful TV apology for mocking the critics of ousted President Joseph Estrada during the latter's impeachment trial.

"Why do we have political turncoats up to this very day? Because there's no law against it. We have no law forbidding political butterflies. Congress should address this. This isn't the problem of Comelec," he said.

Everybody remembers their first kiss. Their first job. Their first car.



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She's up against 'guns, goons, gold, Garci'

By Christian V. Esguerra

HOW DO YOU BEAT SOMEONE LIKE Virgilio Garcillano?

The woman contesting Garcillano's congressional bid in the May elections yesterday said she had apprehensions about going up against the controversial former election commissioner.

But Malou Acosta vowed to put up a "good and decent" fight despite what she said was Garcillano's advantage in "guns, goons, and gold."

"You also have Garci, so it's four Gs," she said in a phone interview.

Acosta and Garcillano are contesting the congressional seat for Bukidnon's first district.

Acosta, the younger sister of outgoing Rep. Nereus Acosta, is running against the alleged architect of the alleged cheating that purportedly helped President Macapagal-Arroyo to win in 2004.

In the series of wiretapped conversations, known as the Hello Garci tapes, that was leaked to the public two years ago, it was suggested that Ms Arroyo had phoned Garcillano, a top official of the Commission on Elections at the time, for updates on the alleged manipulation of the vote.

The resulting scandal set off two impeachment attempts against the President, which were junked in the House of Representatives.

Acosta said her campaign would focus on educating Bukidnon's voters on choosing the right candidates and "protecting our votes."

"We care for Bukidnon and we can't allow it to be left to someone like Garci," said the 38-year-old Acosta.

Acosta is already claiming that the number of voters in one Bukidnon town has been increased from 12,000 in 2004 to 15,000 this year, citing a report.

To beat Garcillano, she said she would link up with church and academic groups.

"Anyone can be a better candidate if it's Garci he's up against. We just need to monitor his movements and make sure that he won't be able to cheat. We have to believe in the people," she said.

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Palace defiant of Alston report

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

MALACAÑANG REMAINED DEFIANT to charges of a United Nations special rapporteur that the Armed Forces and official indifference were to blame for the spate of killings of militants and journalists in the country.

Reacting to the release of Philip Alston's report to the UN Human Rights Council, Malacañang denied that the militants killed in the Philippines were listed in the military's Order of Battle(OB).

"President Arroyo is in full control of the Armed Forces; and the AFP order of battle does not include militant groups operating within Philippine democratic space," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye, spokesperson for the President, said in a statement.

"As a government fighting a live and ongoing insurgency, our troops have strict rules of engagement against armed units of the (Communist Party of the Philippines and their armed wing the New People's Army) and their verified commanders and co-conspirators clearly employing violent means to attain their political ends. Violations of these rules are not sanctioned and we have charged soldiers suspected of criminal acts," Bunye said.

Order of battle

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita said the OB in Alston's possession might not be an "official OB" and wants the special rapporteur to furnish the government a copy.

"It might have been fed to him and then he's using that in his report. We may be asking Mr. Alston, through the DFA (Department of Foreign Affairs) to provide us a copy of such OB to validate it with the official OB of

the AFP and the PNP (Philippine National Police)," Ermita said on Wednesday.

A day before the contents of Alston's official report to the UN were reported in the papers, Malacañang was even praising Alston supposedly for having toned down his report.

In his final report to the UN, Alston said the military was behind most of the killings but it had an attitude of almost total denial. Alston also observed the "passivity, bordering on an abdication of responsibility" of government officials, leaders of Congress, the Ombudsman, Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez.

'Strikingly unconvincing'

He reported that the military gave "strikingly unconvincing" evidence the rebels were behind the killings. He noted that the communist purges happened roughly 20 years ago.

Meanwhile, Malacañang ordered yesterday the release of P1.5 million to fast-track the investigation and resolution of killings of journalists.

It was not explained why the money, about half the amount originally pledged from the President's social fund, was released only now when the fund had been set up more than a year ago.

Also reacting to the UN rapporteur's report, rebel soldier Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV, who is campaigning from his prison cell for a Senate seat, implored media "not to lump all the military together as bad."

He said that while some death squads are rumored to have links with the military, "not all of them are in the military."

Trillanes, accused of attempting a coup in 2003, said the spate of extrajudicial killings "will remain unsolved until the powers-that-be are out of the picture."

He also seized the opportunity to hit the government for being "unable to protect its constituents." "It only shows the government's incompetence."

In a related statement, the National Democratic Front of the Philippines (NDF) has accused Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Cardinal Rosales of being a "tool" of the Arroyo administration.

On Monday, Rosales told reporters in an interview that both sides—the military and the insurgents—have been engaged in killings and that both should be told to stop the killings.

Amid the spate of extrajudicial killings, now is the time "to cultivate a culture of peace," Rosales had said. *With reports from Nikko Dizon and Julie Aurelio*

DOE, Big 3 intervention on Pandacan depot bucked

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SOCIAL JUSTICE SOCIETY IS OPPOSing a move by the Department of Energy and the Big 3 oil companies to intervene in its case seeking the ouster of the Pandacan oil depot from Manila, arguing that any inconvenience resulting from the facility's closure would just be temporary.

The SJS asked the Supreme Court to order Manila Mayor Lito Atienza to enforce municipal Ordinance 8027, ordering the removal of the oil depot from Pandacan within six months.

The high court has granted SJS' petition, saying there was no legal impediment to the implementation of the ordinance.

The DOE and the three oil companies—Chevron Phil., Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Corp.—opposed the decision and have sought to intervene in the case.

They said Ordinance 8027 has been superseded by another, 8119, and that the newer ordinance, which was passed in 2006, gave the companies seven years within which to carry out the relocation. They also warned of oil price hikes, unemployment and the possibility of social unrest should the court's ruling be enforced.

The high court has set the case for oral arguments on April 11.

Only temporary

In its comment filed before the high court, the SJS said the social and economic consequences from an immediate closure of the facility were only temporary.

Once the oil depot is removed from Pandacan, a new commercial area would rise that would make residents' lives more prosperous without exposing them to danger, it said.

The group said the Philippines was the only country in the world where an oil depot, which it described as a "fatal and constant terrorist attraction," was located in the capital and near the place of residence of the President.

The Pandacan oil depot, which is used to store processed oil from the companies' refineries, sits on the southern bank of the Pasig River. It is located in a congested area near Malacañang, surrounded by residential and commercial establishments. The depot is one of the places in the capital that is placed under tight watch whenever the authorities raise the security alert.

The SJS accused the DOE and the oil companies of forum shopping since the oil companies have several civil cases before the Manila regional trial court seeking to nullify Ordinance 8027.

The group said Ordinance 8119 was meant to render a decision on the petition to enforce Ordinance 8027 ineffective. The latter ordinance was also unconstitutional as it "seeks to perpetuate in the heart of the metropolis a constant and serious threat to public safety," it said.

It said an ordinance can only be valid if it promotes the general welfare, it said.

The SJS noted that the DOE and the oil companies had known about its case that was before the Supreme Court from the beginning, but never bothered to intervene until the court handed down a decision.

Customs men protest attrition law

BUREAU OF CUSTOMS EMPLOYEES WILL hold a rally during their lunch break today to protest the penalty clause in the Lateral Attrition Law, further threatening its implementation by the revenue agency.

"We strongly oppose the signing of a performance contract," BOC employees association president Romy Pagulayan told the INQUIRER.

Earlier, all 15 customs district collectors refused to sign the performance contract Customs Commissioner Napoleon Morales had presented to them.

The contract, provided for under the attrition law, would bind the signatories to agreeing to be terminated should they fail to meet target collections by 7.5 percent or more.

On the other hand, it provides for cash incentives for surplus collections.

"The performance contract will place us under contractual status (because we can be terminated at anytime)," association member Lery Bauzon said.

Pagulayan said they were preparing to question the constitutionality of the attrition law in the Supreme Court.

The association said it hoped to draw 300 employees from three Metro Manila ports for the noon rally.

In the resolution they submitted to Morales to justify their decision not to sign the performance contract, the district collectors said the Revenue Performance Evaluation Board had not yet come up with a system "that rationally allocates revenue targets."

They said the board also had not adopted clear guidelines "for a rational performance evaluation."

Instead, they demanded they be included in the process of setting revenue targets and performance evaluation guidelines.

The bureau has a P228-billion collection target this year.

Morales said the standoff will be discussed by the lateral attrition board composed of several government agencies under the leadership of the Department of Finance possibly next week.

Even though the BOC managed to post an overall P2.2-billion surplus in 2006, seven of the 15 district collectors would have been attritable, including certain officials and employees under them, if the penalty clause in the law had been implemented.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

Correction

IN THE MARCH 29 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Scene straight out of 'Dirty Harry' film"—misstated the first name of an education undersecretary. The official's name is Ramon—not Ted—Bacani. He is the undersecretary for operations of the Department of Education.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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Go after violators, Comelec urged

WITH A LITTLE OVER A MONTH to go before the May 10 elections, a poll monitoring group has called on the Commission on Elections to be more active in prosecuting flagrant violators of election laws.

The Quezon City-based Bantay-Eleksyon 2007, a task force created by the 45-member Consortium on Electoral Reform (CER), yesterday pointed to the "widespread violations" of the regulations on posters, which often do not conform to prescribed dimensions and are put up outside designated areas.

Bantay-Eleksyon cited the case of senatorial candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson who was caught on video giving money for a raffle during one of his campaign sorties.

"The Comelec has yet to prosecute even one candidate. As a result, these candidates and their campaign workers are becoming bolder and bolder," the task force said in its report on the campaign.

CER chair Ramon Casiple said there was "a clear possibility" the violations would worsen when the campaign for local posts begins today.

Casiple said the Constitution, the Omnibus Election Code and other election laws give the Comelec exclusive charge of the enforcement of all laws pertaining to the conduct of free, orderly and honest elections.

Jerome Aning

Republic of the Philippines
UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
New Administration Building, Miag-ao Campus
Tel No. (033) 315-81-41; (033) 338-1535 local 180
Fax No. (033) 315-81-41
E-mail address: bac@upv.edu.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID
(IAETB 2007-011)

1. The UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites qualified suppliers to bid for the hereunder project:

NAME OF PROJECT	LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET FOR THE CONTRACT (ABC)	CONTRACT DURATION	COST OF BID DOCUMENTS
Supply of one (1) unit GC-MS Bench Top Ion Trap Mass Spectrometer	Supply & Property Services Office, UPV, Miag-ao Campus	P7,000,000.00	5 Calendar Days	P5,000.00

Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid Opening.

2. All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).
3. The schedule of bidding activities are as follows:

Activities	Schedules	Venue
Issuance of Bid Documents	Starting March 30, 2007 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM	BAC Secretariat Miag-ao Campus
Pre-Bid Conference	April 13, 2007 / 3:00 PM	Tea Room, Cafeteria Building Iloilo City Campus
Opening of Bids	April 26, 2007 / 3:00 PM	Tea Room, Cafeteria Building Iloilo City Campus

4. The BAC will issue to prospective bidders **Eligibility Forms** upon payment of a **non-refundable amount of P200.00** to the University Cashier. A complete set of **bidding documents** may be purchased by interested bidders at the address stated below upon payment of a **non-refundable fee in the amount as stated above** to the University Cashier. The bidding documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his duly authorized representative starting March 30, 2007.
5. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the BAC at or before 3:00 PM on APRIL 26, 2007 at the Tea Room, Cafeteria Building, Iloilo City Campus. All bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the following forms and schedule:

Form of Bid Security	Minimum Amount in % of Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) to be Bid
a) Cash, certified check, cashier's check, manager's check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit	one percent (1%)
b) Bank Guarantee	one and a half percent (1-1/2%)

6. **Request for clarification(s) on any part of the bidding documents or for an interpretation must be in writing and submitted to the BAC Secretariat at least Ten (10) calendar days before the deadline set for the submission and receipt of bids.**
7. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend at the Tea Room, Cafeteria Building, U.P. Visayas, Iloilo City Campus at 3:00 PM on April 26, 2007.
8. The **University of the Philippines in the Visayas** (UPV) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, and to cancel the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder(s).
9. The **University of the Philippines in the Visayas** (UPV) assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.
10. Below is the address and contact persons/numbers of the BAC;

University of the Philippines in the Visayas
DR. CRISPINO A. SACLAUSO
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee
MS. ESTERLINA I. GAMEZ
Head, BAC Secretariat
New Administration Building, Miag-ao Campus
Telephone/Telefax No. (033) 315-8141; (033) 338-1535 local 180
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(PDI - March 30, 2007)

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RESTAURANT TABLES & CHAIRS/S.S BAINE MARIE/S/S 2-TUB SINK / BREAKERS
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ON-SITE AUCTION 2
SITE: TAFT AVE., MANILA (IN-FRONT OF LA SALLE)
REGISTRATION & VIEWING DATES: MARCH 30-31, 2007, 9AM TO 5PM
AUCTION DAY: Watch Out!
APRIL 1, 2007 (SUN) 10:30 AM
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S/S 3-SINK W/ GREASE TRAP / TACO WARMER / HENNY PENNY PRESSURE FRYER
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Bets warned: Take drug test, or else

ELECTIONS COMMISSIONER Resurreccion Borra yesterday said the Commission on Elections was "ready to be controversial" on the issue of mandatory drug testing for candidates, saying the poll body was quite prepared to disqualify candidates who fail to comply.

Only about 20 senatorial candidates had submitted their drug test certificates yesterday, the deadline set by the Comelec.

"They [the candidates] should be the first to honor the law that they passed," Borra told a press conference.

"I don't want to preempt the decision of the Comelec en banc but it could be a controversial issue," he said.

Chance to explain

Borra said senatorial candidates who fail to comply with the drug test requirement would not be automatically disqualified, but would be given a chance to explain the reason for their non-compliance.

"The senators and the congressmen are the ones who passed the law requiring this mandatory drug test for candidates. The obvious rationale is that they would follow it and the Comelec is simply the implementor," Borra said.

Not a good leader

The drug testing requirement for candidates is provided for in RA 9165, or the Dangerous Drugs Act of 2002.

If a candidate fails to submit a drug test certificate, it is presumed he or she is "not law-abiding and therefore, cannot be a good leader," Borra said.

Submitted certificates

As of press time, the senatorial candidates who have submitted the required certificates were independent candidates Francis Pangilinan, Gregorio Honasan and Richard Gomez; Team Unity's Vicente Sotto III, Luis Singson, Juan Miguel Zubiri, Ralph Recto, Mike Defensor, Vicente Magsaysay, Tessie Aquino-Oreta, and Edgardo Angara; the Genuine Opposition's Loren Legarda, Benigno Aquino III, Sonia Roco, Nikki Coseteng, John Osmeña, Alan Peter Cayetano, Manny Villar, Panfilo Lacson, and Francis Escudero; and Felix Cantal of the Philippine Green Republic Party.

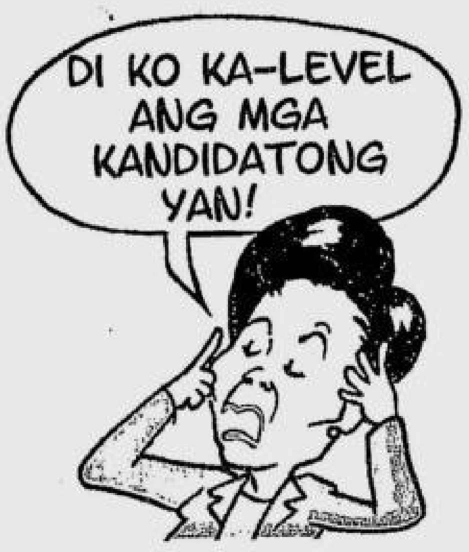
Yet to comply

Those who have yet to comply are Kapatiran candidates Adrian Sison, Martin Bautista and Zosimo Paredes; Team Unity's Cesar Montano, Sultan Jamalul Kiram, Joker Arroyo and Prospero Pichay; GO's Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes IV and Aquilino Pimentel III; the Kilusan Bagong Lipunan's Oliver Lozano, Victor Wood, Eduardo Orpilla, Ruben Enciso, Joselito Pepito Cayetano, Antonio Estrella and Melchor Chavez.

Nikko Dizon

No intellectual giants among bets–Miriam

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.


DI KO KA-LEVEL ANG MGA KANDIDATONG YAN!

ADMINISTRATION SEN. MIRIAM DEFENSOR-Santiago yesterday bemoaned the lack of "intellectual giants" among the present crop of candidates running for the Senate.

"Sadly, among the candidates, there are no honor graduates from the University of the Philippines College of Law, which used to be a hallmark of the Senate in the past," she said.

Among the incumbent senators, only Santiago and Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile graduated with honors from the country's premier law school.

Santiago said voters should pick their senators based on the number of years the aspirants spent in college, and proceeded to rank the candidates for the May 14 elections using her stated criteria—10 years or more of college and postgraduate studies, a graduate of UP and a master's degree from abroad.

If Filipino voters had followed Santiago's prescribed standards to the letter, Senators Ramon "Bong" Revilla and Lito Lapid and ousted President Joseph Estrada would not even have made it to the door of the Senate session hall.

Top three

Based on Santiago's criteria, the top three candidates running for the Senate are Edgardo Angara (master of laws, University of Michigan); Francis Escudero (master's in international law, Georgetown University), and Francis Pangilinan (master's in public administration, Harvard University). All three had 10 years of tertiary studies, graduated from UP and obtained their postgraduate degrees in the United States.

Four senatorial candidates spent nine years at university—Sen. Joker Arroyo (UP Law), Sultan Jamalul Kiram III (Manuel L. Quezon University Law School); Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano (Ateneo Law); and Aquilino Pimentel III (UP Law).

Pimentel III topped the 1990 bar examinations, but performance at the bar is not in Santiago's list of qualifications.

Santiago listed seven candidates with college and master's degrees—Michael Defensor (master's in public administration, UP); Tessie Aquino-Oreta and Loren Legarda (master's in national security administration, National Defense College); Ralph Recto (master's in public administration, UP); Sonia Roco (master's in communication arts, Ateneo); Antonio Trillanes III (master's in public administration, UP); and Manuel Villar Jr. (master's in business administration, UP).

There were 10 candidates in Santiago's list who completed four years of college—Vicente Magsaysay and Luis "Chavit" Singson (commerce, Letran); Cesar Montano (industrial engineering, Lyceum); Prospero Pichay (commerce, De La Salle University); Vicente Sotto III (English, Letran); Juan Miguel Zubiri (agricultural management, UP Los Baños); Benigno Aquino III (economics, Ateneo); Nikki Coseteng (journalism, St. Louis University); Panfilo Lacson (Philippine Military Academy); and John Osmeña (mechanical engineering, San Carlos University).

Education requirement

Santiago warned voters not to trust the resumes being trotted out by the candidates as some of them may not have completed the required thesis or may have dropped out of their courses.

If plans to amend the Charter pan out, Santiago said she would propose that all candidates for elective posts, from President down to barangay chair, should meet a "minimum educational requirement."

In her statement, Santiago included her resume listing her own stellar qualifications. She graduated with honors from the UP and finished her doctorate in law at the University of Michigan as a DeWitt Fellow and Barbour Scholar.

The senator said she did not include her postdoctoral studies at Oxford in the UK, Harvard, Stanford, the University of California in Berkeley, and the Academy of Public International Law at the Hague because each of these involved less than a year of study.

Comelec registry lists 45M voters

By Nikko Dizon

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS (COMelec) yesterday said that there are 45,055,599 registered voters while there are 504,000 registered overseas absentee voters in the coming May 14 mid-term elections.

"These are the final figures as reported by our field people, consolidated by our election records and statistics department, plus the report of the Overseas Absentee Voting (committee)," election commissioner Resurreccion Borra said in a press conference yesterday.

Borra has been designated the agency's officer in charge while Comelec chair, Benjamin Abalos Sr., is on a week-and-a-half official trip to the United States.

Borra said that the Comelec is printing one official ballot for every registered voter.

However, he said the agency would also be giving a "a little allowance for spoilage, defects, and misprinting."

"Our allowance is a reasonable number, not so big but just enough to anticipate any requirements later on. Because you know in the shipment, there might be some losses and we have to prepare for that. But definitely, our requirement is that for one registered voter, we print one ballot," Borra said.

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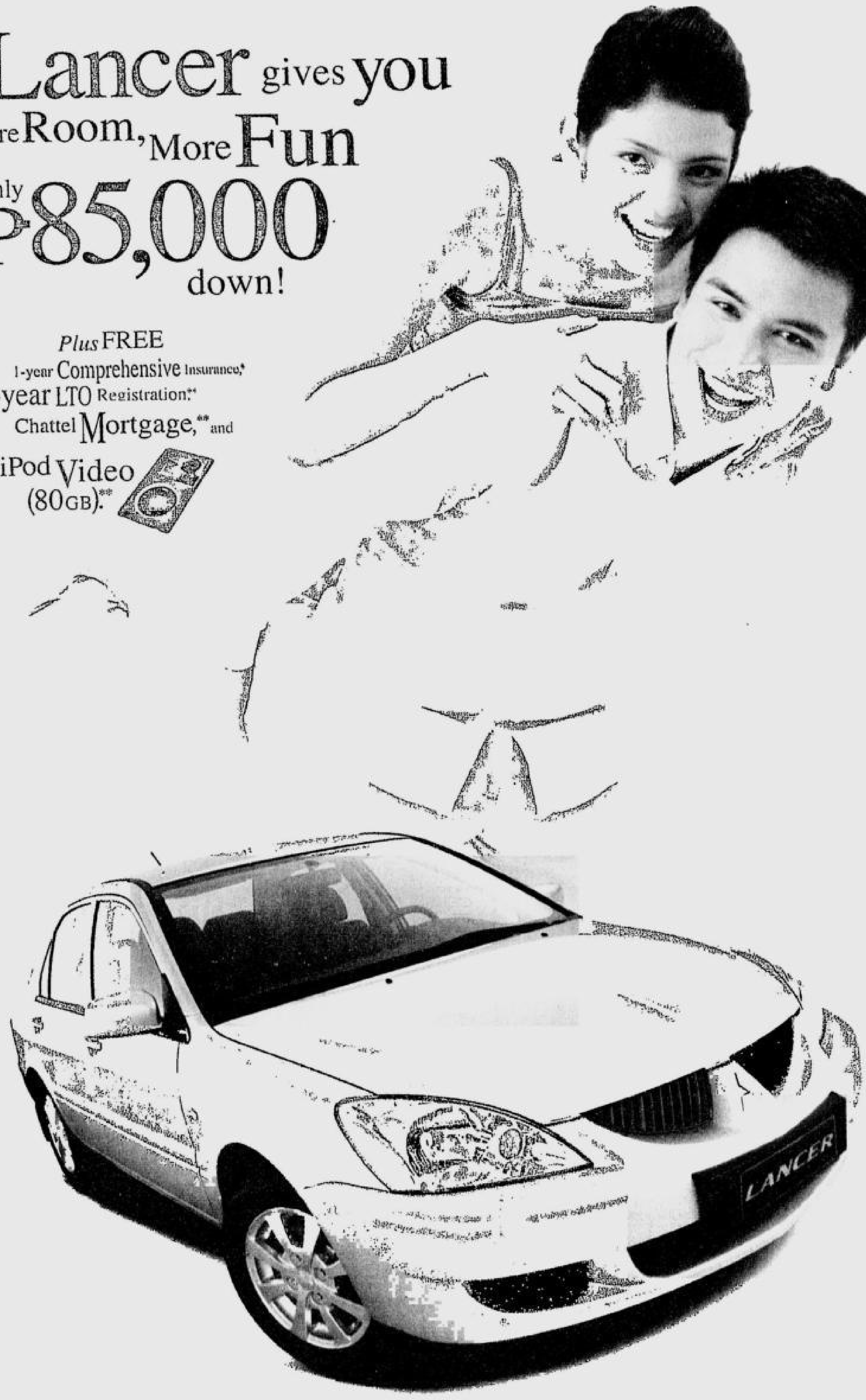
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2 mayors suspended over lamppost scam

From page A1

ment in the controversial P365-million overpriced decorative lampposts in Cebu.

The installation of the lampposts was part of a street-lighting project for the 12th Association of Southeast Asian Nations summit held in January.

The antigraft body directed the Department of the Interior and Local Government and the DPWH to implement the order immediately. The suspension order took effect yesterday.

In a six-page order, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez approved the recommendation of the Visayas Ombudsman to preventively suspend for six months Mayors Thadeo Ouano of Mandaue and Arturo Radaza of Lapu-Lapu and their respective city engineering staffs, and DPWH regional director Robert Lala, assistant regional director Marlina Alviso and seven other DPWH officials.

"The glaring difference in the actual costs and the price quoted by the … officials as supported by the documents and other evidence gathered by the Ombudsman investigating panel constitute strong evidence of guilt," Gutierrez said.

Also suspended were acting Mandaue city engineer Hidelisa Latonio, assistant city engineer Gregorio Omo and engineers Mario Gerolaga, Alfredo Sanchez Sr. and Rosalina Denque; Lapu-Lapu city engineers Julito Cuizon, Fernando Tagaan Jr. and Rogelio Veloso; and Gloria Dindin, former assistant regional director, and Pureza Fernandez, acting chief of the DPWH maintenance division.

Cresencio Bagolor, acting maintenance division chief; Agustinito Hermoso, regional legal officer; Luis Galang, planning and design division chief; Restitutio Diano, administrative division chief; and Buenaventura Pajo, construction division chief.

Plunder charges

The suspended officials are all facing plunder charges in connection with the overpricing of lampposts installed in Cebu, Mandaue and Lapu-Lapu. Cebu City officials were not included in the case since Mayor Tomas Osmeña left the street lighting project entirely to the DPWH.

Ouano refused to comment on the Ombudsman order, saying he had yet to receive a copy. But he told the INQUIRER that he would ask his legal counsel to study his possible legal moves.

Mayor Radaza told the INQUIRER earlier that he would welcome the suspension order.

He also said it would not affect his candidacy because his constituents would be more enraged with the order and would sympathize with him.

Radaza insisted that the controversy on the overpriced lampposts was highly politicized as he denied any involvement in the issue.

Program of works

Gutierrez found merit on the recommendation of acting Deputy Ombudsman Virginia Palanca-Santiago.

Both the local government units of Lapu-Lapu and Mandaue prepared the program of works for the more than 1,800 decorative lampposts installed during the Asean summit.

In the programs of work, both local government units recommended P50,172 as cost of each lamppost, but the importation documents gathered by the graft investigators revealed that the cost was only P6,737.39.

"The cost of each lamppost, apparently, was expanded to almost 10 times each actual cost," Gutierrez said.

The final unit price for each lamppost that was paid for by DPWH escalated to amounts ranging from P83,000 to P224,000 when the cost installation was included.

The Mandaue officials placed a single arm pole at P72,500; double arm pole, P85,500; triple arm pole, P95,000; apex-type lamppost, P50,000 and dome-like lamppost, P50,000.

However, the importation documents disclosed that the items only cost P7,536, P8,121.20, P9,523.37, P6,737.79 and P11,750, respectively.

The same scheme was also discovered in Lapu-Lapu City.

WORLD'S MOST EXPENSIVE LAMPPOST: The hat-like model Apex allegedly cost P95,000 each. CDN PHOTO

3 National Printing Office workers fired but never investigated

From page A1

Borra was also appointed yesterday by Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. Comelec officer in charge while the latter is on a week-and-a-half official trip to the United States.

Sources earlier told the INQUIRER that a member of the Comelec printing committee caught the three men taking down the serial numbers of the official ballots and the places (municipalities and cities) where these ballots were "assigned," which were considered "confidential."

Caught in restricted area

The men were wearing IDs and jackets similar to that of Comelec employees assigned to supervise the printing of official ballots, election returns, and other accountable forms.

They were caught at the highly restricted pre-press area.

Asked yesterday if the three men were then detailed at Evardone's office, Borra said: "Yes."

"We were surprised why there was that kind of incident," Borra said, adding that it was the "vigilance of our own people there watching the conduct of the printing of official ballots that discovered that kind of incident."

Borra said that the Comelec "found it strange" that the three men had to copy the serial numbers when these were provided by the Comelec to the NPO "for purposes of printing the official serial numbers of the officialballots."

"Why did they do that? Were these three casuals pretending to do that other than their hidden motivation to do something? That was the question but they were immediately removed," Borra said.

In an initial investigation, Borra said that the three men claimed that they simply wanted to know the serial number of the official ballots.

They can deny but…

Abalos earlier said that the Comelec directed the NPO to conduct the investigation before the agency steps in because it was NPO employees who were involved.

Asked why he thought the NPO was not able to dig deeper into the incident, Borra replied: "Because along with the three casuals, the former national director was also removed," referring to Evardone.

A reporter also told Borra that the NPO had denied the incident.

"They can always deny but we have the record. The reports are with me," Borra said.

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Alimony must continue even if Julia is now Julio

From page A1

Lawrence Roach, 48, had argued the decision of his 55-year-old ex-wife to switch genders and change her name from Julia to Julio Roberto Silverwolf voided their 2004 divorce agreement because a man cannot legally pay alimony to another man.

But Circuit Judge Jack R. St. Arnold ruled the language of the agreement was clear and that in the eyes of the law, nothing changed significantly enough to free Roach from the $1,250 monthly obligation.

Since Florida courts have ruled that sex-change surgery cannot legally change a person's birth gender, Roach technically is not paying alimony to a man, the judge said.

Silverwolf's attorney, Gregory Nevins, said his client was pleased with the ruling, although he disagreed with Florida's refusal to legally recognize gender reassignment surgery.

Roach said he would continue his fight to end the payments.

"We're going to try everything we can," he said. "I can't rest until I get satisfaction."

Arguments

During Tuesday's hearings, Roach's lawyers argued that their client had agreed to pay alimony to the woman he divorced—not the man she became after a sex change.

But the ex-wife's attorneys said the operation did not alter the agreement.

The lawyers and the judge had agreed the case delved into relatively unchartered legal territory. They found only a 2004 Ohio case that addressed whether or not a transsexual could still collect alimony after a sex change.

"There is not a lot out there to help us," St. Arnold said.

Roach and his wife, Julia, divorced in 2004 after 18 years of marriage. The 48-year-old utility worker agreed to pay her $1,250 a month in alimony. Since then, Julia Roach, 55, had a sex change and legally changed her name to Julio Roberto Silverwolf.

"It's illegal for a man to marry a man and it should likewise be illegal for a man to pay alimony to a man," Roach's attorney John McGuire said. "When she changed to man, I believe she terminated that alimony."

Silverwolf did not appear in court on Tuesday and has declined to talk about the divorce. Silverwolf's lawyer, Gregory Nevins, said the language of the divorce decree was clear and firm—Roach agreed to pay alimony until his ex-wife died or remarried.

"Those two things haven't happened," said Nevins, a senior staff attorney with the national gay rights group Lambda Legal.

Holes in arguments

The judge poked holes in several of Roach's legal arguments and noted that appeals courts have declined to legally recognize a sex change in Florida when it comes to marriage. The appellate court "is telling us you are what you are when you are born," he said.

In the Ohio case, an appeals court ruled in September 2004 that a Montgomery County man must continue to pay $750 a month in alimony to his transsexual ex-wife because her sex change was not reason enough to violate the agreement.

Roach's other attorney, John Smitten, said the case fell into a legal void.

"It's probably something that has to be addressed by the legislature," Smitten said. "There is one other case in the entire United States. It really needs to be addressed either for or against the concept of eliminating alimony for that reason."

Roach, who has since remarried, said he had been unable to convince state and federal lawmakers to tackle the issue.

"This is definitely wrong. I have a right to move forward with my life. I wish no harm and hardship to that person," Roach said of his ex-wife. "They can be the person they want to be, to find happiness and peace within themselves. I have the right to do the same. But I can't rest because I'm paying a lot of money every month."

Transsexual rights showdown

The legal fight is the second transsexual rights showdown in Pinellas County in less than a week. On Friday, transsexual activists from around the United States packed a City Commission meeting in neighboring Largo to oppose the firing of City Manager Steve Stanton after he announced he was a transsexual.

Despite the support, commissioners voted 5-2 to fire Stanton. *AP*

Saudi king, key US ally, calls Iraq occupation illegal

RIYADH—SAUDI ARABIA'S KING Abdullah on Wednesday denounced the American military presence in Iraq as an "illegitimate occupation" and called on the West to end its financial embargo on the Palestinians, seeking to show some distance from his close ally, the United States.

The monarch made the comments in an opening speech of an Arab summit in the Saudi capital, where US allies are trying to win support from other Arab governments to promote an Arab peace initiative that Washington hopes could boost the peace process with Israel. *(See related story in The World, Page A26)*

King Abdullah has not publicly spoken so harshly about the US-led military intervention in Iraq before, and his latest remarks suggest his alliance with Washington may be less strong than administration officials have been hoping, according to The New York Times.

Abdullah's speech was a strongly worded lecture to Arab leaders that their divisions had helped fuel turmoil across the Middle East, urging them to show unity to resolve them. But he nodded to hard-liners with his criticism of the US in Iraq.

"In beloved Iraq, blood is flowing between brothers, in the shadow of an illegitimate foreign occupation, and abhorrent sectarianism threatens a civil war," Abdullah, whose country quietly backed the 2003 US-led invasion of Iraq, told the gathering.

"In wounded Palestine, the mighty people suffer from oppression and occupation," he said. "It has become vital that the oppressive blockade imposed on the Palestinians end as soon as possible so the peace process will get to move in an atmosphere without oppression."

Abdullah insisted that only when Arab leaders unite will they be able to prevent "foreign powers from drawing the region's future."

"The real blame should be directed at us, the leaders of the Arab nation," he said. "Our constant disagreements and rejection of unity have made the Arab nation lose confidence in our sincerity and lose hope."

In Washington, the White House insisted that Abdullah, a key ally, was wrong to say the US military presence in Iraq was an "illegitimate foreign occupation."

"The United States is in Iraq at the request of the Iraqis and under a United Nations mandate. Any suggestion to the contrary is wrong," said National Security Council spokesperson Gordon Johndroe.

US Department of State spokesperson Tom Casey said the King's comments would not affect US-Saudi relations.

"I have only seen the press reports of what the king has said but I think what is more important is that we do have very good and very strong relations with Saudi Arabia," he told journalists in Washington. *AP, AFP, NYT*

Gov't asks SC to junk Satur's TRO petition

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL HAS ASKED the Supreme Court to dismiss Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo's petition to have his arrest warrant held in abeyance and questioning the murder charges filed against him for the killing of suspected spies in the Communist Party of the Philippines in the 1980s.

The Supreme Court will hear oral arguments on his petition today.

In a comment to the court, Solicitor General Agnes Devanadera contested Ocampo's argument that the skeletons found in a Leyte grave that led to the murder charges had been planted there by the military, and said there was probable cause to charge him in the killings.

Ocampo also could not claim that he could not be charged with murder since he had already been charged with rebellion, Devanadera said.

Against public interest

She also said the temporary restraining order Ocampo was seeking against his arrest should not be issued in order to protect the public interest, since all criminal acts should be investigated and prosecuted immediately. It said the reasons for issuing a TRO were not present.

She also warned that granting Ocampo temporary liberty or releasing him to the custody of the House of Representatives despite his having been charged with a non-bailable offense would set an unfavorable precedent.

"If petitioner's prayer were granted, others similarly situated should be accorded the same treatment. This will then open the floodgates to similar petitioners, resulting in disorderly proceedings. The immediate availability for trial of persons criminally charged could no longer be assured," she said.

Oral arguments

Ocampo's lawyer, Romeo Capulong, is set to appear at the Supreme Court for the oral arguments on his petition to have the arrest warrant and multiple murder charges against his client dismissed.

"The government and the military better watch out for the oral arguments," Bayan Muna secretary general Nathanael Santiago said in a statement.

Recycled grave

"The alleged mass grave blamed on Ocampo is a recycled mass grave. The military tried (from) 2000 up to 2005 to use it against local activists, but their concocted case was dismissed by a local court. Now they obviously transferred the bones, used the same names of alleged purge victims and resurrected the case in a foul attempt to discredit Ocampo," he said.

Ocampo was arrested on March 16 after he showed up at the Supreme Court in Manila to file a petition for TRO on his arrest. He has since been detained at the Manila Police District headquarters.

Enough evidence

Devanadera said there was enough evidence against Ocampo to charge him with multiple murder. Among these were the testimonies of witnesses who said they were present when Ocampo ordered the killing of suspected government spies in the CPP.

She said Ocampo was out of prison when the killings took place, but that his contention that he was a prisoner of the Marcos regime at the time was factual in nature and should be discussed during his trial.

With Christian V. Esguerra

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THIS ISN'T TAGAYTAY, it's better. The victims of the hostage situation who never made it to their original destination are special guests at the Palace with a full service buffet table to feast on. LYN RILLON

DUCAT DAUGHTERS from their home at BF Resort, Las Piñas, appeal for understanding, saying that their dad was passionate about helping the poor. EDWIN BACASMAS

THE SECOND MAN: Ducat's aide, Caesar Carbonell, is hugged by his siblings, Fairylyn and Mark Anthony, who visited him in jail at the Manila Police District headquarters. REM ZAMORA

Tagaytay trip ends in fun and feast at Palace

From page A1

the 26 children from the Musmos Daycare Center owned by Ducat.

All but four of the 26, their parents in tow, were bused yesterday to the Palace where they were treated to a sumptuous *merienda* and a tour of the Malacañang Museum.

The 6- and 7-year-olds (some wearing T-shirts that read "Jun Ducat *Tulong! Sulong!*") had the President's undivided attention for over an hour at the Heroes' Hall, where they were seated on two rows of low benches, in a simulated classroom setting directed by Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara.

Before Ms Arroyo arrived, her image adviser rehearsed the "pupils" on how to stand up when greeting the President.

'Naharang lang po'

In the "classroom," a cheerful Ms Arroyo sat on a pillow and asked the kids what happened and how they felt. (The exchange was in Filipino.)

Their frank, innocent answers apparently surprised her.

"You were supposed to go on an excursion?" Ms Arroyo said.

"Naharang lang po" was the reply.

"You were blocked. Who blocked you? How did you feel when you were prevented [from proceeding to Tagaytay]?" She echoed their reply. "Happy? Exciting?"

Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral tried to put the answer in context, pointing out that they had plenty of food inside the bus during the hostage-taking.

Ms Arroyo knelt on a pillow on the carpeted floor to have better eye contact with her "class," and pointed out the many TV cameras aimed at them. She told them there were more pictures of them during the hostage-taking.

"Kahapon ang daming pictures. So *masaya, masaya kahapon,"* Ms Arroyo said.

She picked a girl and was surprised to read the child's name on her ID card: "Angelica Arroyo? We could be related. So Angelica, are you happy? Were you afraid yesterday?"

The shy child shook her head.

'You want merienda?'

The kids appeared at ease, chatting and unmindful of the President's presence, and were apparently more curious about the TV equipment.

"There are many microphones because [the media] want to hear your voice," Ms Arroyo said.

As her class grew impatient, the grandmother of four little girls inquired: "You want a tour of Malacañang? You want *merienda?"*

"Opo!" was the collective reply.

On the buffet table were spaghetti bolognese, cocktail hotdogs, French fries, mini-sandwiches, suman, siomai, lumpia, butterscotch bars and ice cream. Palace waiters served fruit juice.

Cabral said Ms Arroyo later gave the children potato chips and school materials.

"The bags of potato chips were even bigger than the kids," Cabral quipped.

Ducat's 'enemies'

Earlier, 6-year-old Cristy Lyn Pacliban told reporters that she and the other kids were not afraid of Ducat but of his "enemies."

"We got nervous whenever Sir Ducat held a grenade or a gun because we thought his enemies would then move in on us," she said in Filipino.

Pacliban, who was wearing a cap printed with the message "Vote GMA for President" (a souvenir from the 2004 presidential election, according to her mother), said this of Ducat: "He gives us what we want, and he is helpful to the people."

Ms Arroyo had originally planned to visit the ex-hostages and their families in Parola, Tondo, at 1:30 p.m. The plan was scuttled allegedly for security reasons and because the kids were already at the Manila City Hall.

Social welfare officer Honorita Bayuda said the kids were treated to a Jollibee store on Kalaw Street in Manila by Parola barangay chair Justo de la Cruz before they were collected by a white coaster of the Presidential Management Staff and taken to Malacañang.

Mary Jane de la Cruz, one of the parents, told reporters that the kids were not afraid when herded to another bus.

She and another mother, Nora Gad, said their children were not traumatized by the hostage-taking because they all had fun, toys and food during the 10-hour standoff.

She rejected the government's plan to slap a slew of charges on Ducat, saying he was a good man who had been helping them.

A FORLORN LOOK from a window of the bus. Though it was all over, the young hostages said they were very happy during their 10-hour detention. Their innocence saved them, Social Welfare Secretary Cabral said. RYAN LIM

THE FIREARMS: Senior Supt. Marcelino Pedrozo and Senior Insp. Edgar Reyes inspect the .45-cal. pistol, Uzi submachine gun and ammo seized from Ducat and Carbonell. REM ZAMORA

Parents want Ducat freed

Pedrozo said some of the parents that he and his men talked to were not interested in filing a case against Ducat. *(Related stories on Pages A1 and A13.)*

There was sympathy in Parola, Tondo, a crowded slum where Ducat had built a pre-school day care center to give children a free start in education.

"At first, the parents were all angry at what he did. He used the children," said Adelfa Cabugayan, mother of a 6-year-old girl taken captive.

"But then, we realized Ducat is a very good person. He did so much here in our community," she said.

The parent of another 6-year-old boy hostage, Evelyn Aberia, was more forgiving: "We want him to be released from jail. The children are all OK."

One of the teachers at the day care center said he saw nothing wrong in what Ducat had done to the children. "We respect his beliefs," Elmer Calleja said.

"We will go to Manila City Hall today to petition for his release," he said.

No trauma

Cabral said the kids showed no signs of trauma but would be monitored by psychiatrists and social welfare officers in the next two weeks.

"As you can see, they are all fine. In this case, it's very good that they're innocent about it," she said, noting that Ducat himself had admitted that the kids were not afraid even when they saw his guns.

Cabral said it was the four teachers who were traumatized by the ordeal.

"The teachers are also undergoing stress debriefing, because they are the ones who understood what the situation was all about. I think they were more stressed than the children. They knew that they were all in danger from the arms and explosives that were in the bus," she said, adding that some of the parents were also undergoing counseling because of the anxiety they experienced waiting for the release of their kids.

During the Palace visit, Ms Arroyo made no specific commitment about assistance to the Parola families, according to Cabral.

"I don't think the President wants people to get the impression that she's doing things as a reaction to what Mr. Ducat did, because we do not want to encourage other people to voice their grievances in the same manner," Cabral said, adding:

"And really the President is aware of all of the socioeconomic problems we have, and she's doing everything that she can. I'm sure she will appreciate a little patience from the people."

Cabral said it was "understandable" that the parents were "not inclined" to press charges on Ducat.

"That person has been their benefactor for a long time, and although they were dismayed that he was able to do this thing, they still look with some gratitude to him because he has put up the center for their children and has contributed to their welfare," she told reporters.

But Ducat should be behind bars, Cabral said, "because what he did was very wrong."

"He put the children in grave danger, and I don't think that even though his intentions were good in expressing their grievances, the means that he used is not acceptable, she said.

But Mirabelle Moreno, 27, said her son did not seem traumatized by the experience: "He said they were just playing and singing nursery rhymes inside the bus."

Helen Cabunayan, whose daughter and niece were among the hostages, said she and other parents were planning to join the group of Parola residents demonstrating in front of the Manila Police District headquarters where Ducat and his accomplice, Caesar Carbonell, are detained.

Release Ducat

"We will demand the release of Sir Ducat. We want him out of jail," Cabunayan said.

Angelica Arroyo's mother, Gemma, said she would help organize a petition so Ducat would not be charged and prosecuted.

Said Gemma Arroyo: "He was only helping. I am not mad about what he did. We knew he wasn't going to hurt the kids. Of course, at first we were afraid. But after several hours, it was clear he only wanted to talk. Sometimes, you need to be brave to be heard. Is it so bad to help the poor?" *With a report from Tina G. Santos*

Illegal detention, gun raps filed against Armando Ducat

From page A1

Ducat's two hand grenades were real but were not meant to inflict harm as they had no detonating mechanisms.

"(The grenades) were carefully rigged, the blasting caps had been removed to render them incapable of exploding," said the EOD expert, who refused to be named because he was not authorized to give information to the media.

Ducat and Caesar Carbonell were also armed with an Uzi machine pistol and a .45-cal. pistol when they seized the busload of children who were students at the preschool he owns, police said.

During the hostage crisis, as the global media zoomed in, beaming images of the standoff around the world, Ducat railed against government corruption, demanded free housing and education for his pupils and threatened to explode two grenades if police mounted a rescue effort.

Additional charges can still be filed against Ducat and Carbonell, according to Supt. Marcelino Pedrozo of the MPD Criminal Investigation and Detection Unit.

Parents won't file charges

"The Department of Social Welfare and Development, which will represent the state on behalf of the children, is still consulting with its lawyers if they should file several counts [of violating] Republic Act No. 7610 (or the Special Protection of Children Against Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act) just in case the parents won't file a case," Pedrozo said.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez said the reluctance of the parents to prosecute Ducat would not hamper the filing of charges against him because what he committed was a public offense.

"What we will probably see as a problem is that these people will not testify if they sympathize with him," Gonzalez said.

He also said he did not think that the lack of testimony against Ducat from the parents would cripple the prosecution for the hostage-taking because the incident was known to the public.

Mitigating circumstance

The justice secretary, nevertheless, acknowledged that Ducat's surrender could be a mitigating circumstance in his case.

Gonzalez believes Ducat committed an act of terrorism, but Ducat cannot yet be charged with violating the country's antiterrorism law.

The law, known as the Human Security Act of 2007, will only take effect on July 14.

"It's very clear that what he did was hostage-taking which is actually one of the actions in the definition of terms in terrorism, holding hostage defenseless children, threatening to blow up [the bus]," the justice secretary said.

But opposition senatorial candidate Aquilino "Koko" Pimentel III said what Ducat did was not terrorism.

Pimentel said public officials would have found themselves in a bind had they applied the Human Security Act in Ducat's case.

"What he did may be labeled a terrorist act under the antiterrorism law because of the vagueness of the law," he said.

"He held the children hostage to force the government to give in to his demand for scholarship. So now even a situation which some people have found tragic and comical can be labeled a terrorist act. That's how dangerous that law is," he went on.

Negotiator

He said the law's definition of terrorist acts as those that terrify citizens and blackmail the government was so encompassing that the law could be declared void by the Supreme Court for being vague.

Supt. Orlando Yebra, one of the negotiators during the hostage drama, said he was confident from the start that the crisis would end peacefully.

"He did not really have any intention of inflicting injury and he only wanted to say something," said Yebra, an expert in hostage negotiations.

'Common criminals'

Ducat and Carbonell spent their first night in the company of common criminals at the MPD detention cell.

They were transferred to the integrated jail on the second floor of the MPD headquarters on UN Avenue from the General Assignments Office on the ground floor.

The integrated jail is where "common criminals" arrested for petty theft, snatching and homicide are detained before they are transferred to the Manila City Jail. *With a report from Reuters*

Was it a politician's publicity stunt?

From page A1

that I might be criticized for supposedly riding on the incident," Singson said in Filipino. "I just thought that it was more important to save the children. It was the children who were on my mind."

The senatorial aspirant is no stranger to such accusations. He was also criticized for showing up during fights of boxing sensation Manny Pacquiao, often standing beside the pugilist during celebrations in the ring.

In the hostage drama, Singson said he felt "compelled to do whatever (I) could to rescue the children" following a call from Caesar Carbonell, one of the suspects who took over the busload of kindergarten-age kids.

Campaign platform

Being a former police chief, Singson said he was used to similar situations. "Even before he (Ducat) alighted, I already got hold of one of the grenades. I secured both grenades before I allowed the children to get off."

"Ducat wanted to prolong his life that's why I went there," Singson said in the statement. "That's why I entered the bus. I told him that I would not get off until he got what he was asking for. That's why I told him I won't leave him."

The press release said that while Singson "understands Ducat's intentions, he rebuked the latter for his illegal manner of voicing out his demands."

It played out too well

"Singson's campaign platform 'Boses ng Probinsya' envisions building more schools, particularly colleges, in the countryside and institute a system through which children in public schools would be given allowances as well as free uniforms and learning materials," it said.

Reelectionist Sen. Panfilo Lacson of the Genuine Opposition expressed doubts at the authenticity of Wednesday's hostage drama, saying it played out too well for Singson.

"There were indications that there was no way it was not going to be resolved peacefully," said Lacson.

He said Sen. Alfredo Lim, a former Manila police officer who knew Ducat, accurately predicted the outcome of the event. "He knew nothing was going to happen."

Lacson said even the Arroyo administration benefited from the stunt as Ducat went on radio hitting corruption and less opportunities for the poor but leaving out President Macapagal-Arroyo from among his subjects of criticism.

"How can it be that the opposition was the ones he criticized for corruption? You hit corruption, you hit Ms Arroyo. He singled out Senator Lim," Lacson said. Lim is running for Manila mayor in the May election.

Lacson said he was not saying Singson stage-managed the whole thing to prop up his campaign but he said a full-blown investigation was in order.

"It's an open-and-shut case. There are many witnesses. If nobody will step forward here, there are many who witnessed the hostage-taking abroad," Lacson said.

Manila Mayor Lito Atienza said he was asking police to look into all angles in the drama, including "political machination." He said everything Ducat said yesterday was political. "He's a politician by nature, by make, by experience. There's a possibility of other politicians involved," he said. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Allison W. Lopez*

Saguisag wants Zuño disbarred for plea change in coup trial

By Julie M. Aurelio

SAYING THAT THE changing of one's plea from "not guilty" to "guilty" after all the evidence had already been presented was unheard of in law school, lawyer Rene Saguisag threatened to file a disbarment case against the country's chief prosecutor for allowing such a motion in ongoing court hearings against rebel soldiers.

Rene Saguisag said Chief State Prosecutor Jovencito Zuño could face administrative as well as disbarment charges if he does not withdraw the motion of one of the accused coup plotters, 1Lt Lawrence San Juan, from "Not guilty" to "Guilty" of the lesser offense of conspiracy.

San Juan, who has distanced himself from his former comrades in the Magdalo group, filed his motion last week in what is apparently a plea bargain to get a lesser sentence. He is the only one among the accused to do so.

Lawyers of the other Magdalo soldiers accused of storming the Premiere in Makati in 2003 as part of an alleged coup attempt, also objected to the motion, citing that it would affect the status of all the cases.

During a hearing yesterday at a Makati court, Saguisag said Zuño should not have accepted San Juan's motion, as the prosecution had already finished presenting its evidence.

"You allow a change of plea in the beginning to save the state from expenses of litigation. This case has been dragging for nearly four years, so why did the motion to change plea surface only now?" said Saguisag, who is representing 1Lt Nathaniel Rabonza.

Rabonza, along with Navy Lt. Antonio Trillanes, Capt Segundino Orfiano, 1Lt Ashley Acedillo and 1Lt Billy Pascua, also face coup d'etat charges for their participation in the failed Oakwood mutiny in 2003.

Conspiracy to commit coup d'etat carries a jail term of 6 to 12 years, while coup d'etat is punishable by life imprisonment.

The court proceeding to determine whether San Juan made his motion voluntarily was deferred yesterday. Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Oscar Pimentel was absent and substitute Judge Judge Maria Cristina Cornejo deferred action.

"This is totally against public policy," Saguisag commented.

It would be setting a dangerous precedent if from here on we allow the state to hear a case for two years or so, then allow the accused to change his plea after hearing all the evidence," he pointed out.

"This is propaganda of the government, to make someone plead guilty to the crime," he added.

However, Paolo Primavera, San Juan's counsel, argued that if the evidence is weak, then the court must allow the change in plea," Primavera said.

"Neither the prosecution nor the rest of the accused has the right to question the change of plea since the motion is addressed to the sole discretion of the court," he added.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Friday, March 30, 2007
5th Week of Lent

1st Reading:	Jer 20:10-13
Gospel:	John 10:31-42

The Jews picked up stones to throw at Jesus; so he said, "I have openly done many good works among you which the Father gave me to do. For which of these do you stone me?"

The Jews answered, "We are not stoning you for doing a good work but for insulting God; you are only a man and you make yourself God."

Then Jesus replied, "Is this not written in your Law: I said: you are gods? So those who received this word of God were called gods and the Scripture is always true. Then what should be said of the one anointed and sent into the world by the Father? Am I insulting God when I say: 'I am the Son of God?'

"If I am not doing the works of my Father, do not believe me. But if I do them, even if you have no faith in me, believe because of the works I do, and know that the Father is in me and I in the Father."

Again they tried to arrest him, but Jesus escaped from their hands. He went away again to the other side of the Jordan, to the place where John had baptized, and there he stayed.

Many people came to him and said, "John showed no miraculous signs, but he spoke of this man and everything he said was true." And many became believers in that place.

Commentary

"The Lord is with me"—the cry of Jeremiah, of Jesus, and all who follow him to the cross and resurrection. Those who are punished and persecuted because of speaking the truth-the word of God—cry out for the presence of God and God's vindication, remembering that God has always rescued the life of the poor from the power of the wicked. Jesus befriends and calls the poor "God's beloved" and because of this the power of the wicked comes after him.

They seek to stone him to death and he stands up to them. "Why? What good deed are you stoning me for?" And they are intent on killing him for his words, for his intimacy with God, his refusal to conform to their idea of God that is narrow and self-serving of their status and interests. He tries using the Scriptures that they should know in their hearts, but they are hardened against him. He tries in vain to make them realize what it means that "the Father is in me and I in him." Is Jesus still trying to make us realize that and what it means for our actions towards everyone else?

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Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0810 Series of 2007

Manila police chief sacked

From page A1

"Masunurin naman tayong lingkod-bayan (We public servants follow orders)," he said.

It was Rosales whom Ducat observed, and reporters saw, as laughing while the hostage-taker railed about corruption in the government.

Because of Rosales' behavior, Ducat attempted to drive the bus away from the Manila City Hall to Makati.

"Frankly, I'm not very happy about the way these things were handled," Puno said in a press conference yesterday at Camp Crame.

"The good news is that no one was hurt. The children are safe and there were no unfortunate incidents that occurred [on Wednesday]. But really, this is not the way our rules specified that such things should be handled," he said.

In serious danger

Puno cited lapses in police operational procedures that seriously endangered the lives of the hostages and the general public.

Particularly, he said, Abarzosa and other police officers failed to report to Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

But Puno stopped short of blaming Atienza and Deputy Director General Reynaldo Varilla, chief of the National Capital Region Police Office, for the lapses.

Per procedures laid down by the Peace and Order Council of the Department of Interior and Local Government, Atienza was to have led a crisis management team to handle the hostage situation.

PUNO

But Varilla was observed by reporters at the scene acting as the ground commander.

"I want to know who they were taking orders from. It was not really clear who was in charge," Puno said. He admitted that until yesterday, he and his men were not aware who among the PNP officers in the area was acting as the ground commander.

Puno said that Varilla was "taking orders" from him, and that these were "followed to the letter."

But he said his orders were "taken over by developments."

Tried and tested

Puno said the police operational procedure manual contained a tried and tested hostage negotiation method that was "universally accepted and learned."

He said it appeared to him that Ducat, and not the police, was "in control of the situation."

Puno said the police failed to implement a crowd control strategy that would have prevented kibitzers and members of the media from getting close to the bus.

He pointed out that police failed to take charge of traffic in the area.

Puno said he was so frustrated at the situation the other day that he wanted to throw the remote control device at his TV set while watching live coverage of the incident.

Asked by reporters why he did not proceed to the scene, he said: "I did not go there because I did not want to be another source of entertainment."

Puno also said he constituted an investigating committee led by Razon after a "post-situation and evaluation" meeting with top PNP officials.

The committee will be composed of representatives of units from the Directorate for Investigation and Detective Management under Chief Supt. Geary Barias and the Criminal Investigation and Detection Management under Director Edgardo Doromal.

'The best we could'

But Abarzosa said: "We did the best that we could to peacefully resolve the hostage drama. If there were lapses, we're but human."

THE PORTABLE LOUD SPEAKER, which Ducat asked for in the initial stage of the hostage drama, allowed him to speak. And the police said it was a good sign that he was not on the edge of doing anything rash. ERIK ARZAS

According to Puno, Sen. Ramon "Bong" Revilla Jr. and Team Unity senatorial candidate Luis "Chavit" Singson did not breach procedure by participating in the negotiations.

"It's the police officers [who breached procedure]. But the ground commander should have gone through channels, cleared with his superior officers, and made sure [the participation of Revilla and Singson] was within the guidelines," he said.

Revilla was seen consulting with Varilla and other police officers before getting on the bus and after leaving it.

An MPD official, who asked not to be named to protect his career, admitted that there were several serious lapses in the handling of the situation.

Not heroes

The official cited the presence of the politicians as among these lapses: "It was a police operation. [The politicians] should not have been there, in the first place."

Puno said he considered Ducat and Carbonell terrorists because they were armed with hand grenades, an assault rifle and a .45 cal. pistol while holding the children and their teachers hostage.

"They should not be treated as heroes," he said, warning others from emulating their example.

"These two individuals should not be praised. They are the scum of society because they held hostage an entire society because of their crazy demands. Even the devil can quote Scripture."

Of Ducat, Puno said: "A Robin Hood [clothed] in priestly robes who holds a grenade and takes children hostage automatically becomes a terrorist. And we are going to deal with him as a criminal."

PNP Director General Oscar Calderon immediately ordered charges to be filed against Ducat and Carbonell.

"Regardless of his (Ducat's) intentions, the method he used was wrong. His illegal acts endangered the lives of very young schoolchildren and sabotaged the efforts of the government to promote peace and order in the country," Calderon said in a statement.

'Shut up'

Puno dismissed statements made on TV by Supt. Cipriano Querol, MPD spokesperson for the hostage-taking, that the police had done well.

"You know, I don't like it when they are patting themselves on the back," Puno said. "He (Querol) has no business talking. I'm telling all of those people, 'From now on, shut up.' It's not their place to make comments about how they performed. It is for the PNP leadership to assess their performance."

In the TV interview, Querol said the introduction of third parties in negotiations "depended on whether they could help."

"It's on a case-to-case basis," he said.

"The decision was made after careful analysis of the situation. They also passed through the process [of evaluation by the ground commander]."

Querol admitted that police committed lapses in crowd control. "But it favored the resolution of the incident because Ducat was looking for a captive audience. It was a judgment call. The presence of people and members of the media helped ease the tension," he said.

He added that he designated a section of the Mehan Garden as a media center, "but it was not close enough" to the bus.

Puno said the public would be informed of police procedures "so that everybody can cooperate with [how] these things are going to be handled in the future."

"We cannot tolerate laxity or carelessness in the implementation of the rules, and we want everybody to know what these are," he said. *With a report from Tina G. Santos*

Rules of engagement

RULE 22 OF THE POLICE OPerating Procedures titled "Hostage Situations" calls for the formation of a crisis management task group, isolation of the scene, and denial of entry and exit to unauthorized persons.

Section 9 of the rule outlines the procedures for hostage negotiations:

- Stabilize and contain the situation.
- Select the right time to make contact with the hostage-taker.
- Take time when negotiating.
- Allow the hostage-taker to speak.
- Don't offer the hostage-taker anything. What he will ask for will be part of the negotiations.
- Avoid directing frequent attention to the victims when talking to the hostage-taker.
- Do not call them hostages. Be as honest as possible, avoid tricks, be sincere.
- Never dismiss any request from the hostage-taker as trivial or unimportant.
- Never say "No."
- Soften the demands.
- Never set a deadline; try not to accept a deadline.
- Do not make alternate suggestions not agreed upon in the negotiations.
- Do not introduce outsiders (non-law enforcement officers) into the negotiation process unless their presence is extremely necessary in the solution of the crisis, and provided they shall be properly advised on the do's and don'ts of hostage negotiations.
- Do not allow any exchange of hostages unless extremely necessary; in particular do not exchange a negotiator for a hostage.
- Avoid negotiating face to face.
- Law enforcement officers without proper training shall not be allowed to participate in hostage negotiations.

BROKE THE RULES? Sen. Bong Revilla was the first to enter the bus to start negotiations. Much later, Ducat released a sick child to him. INQUIRER PHOTO

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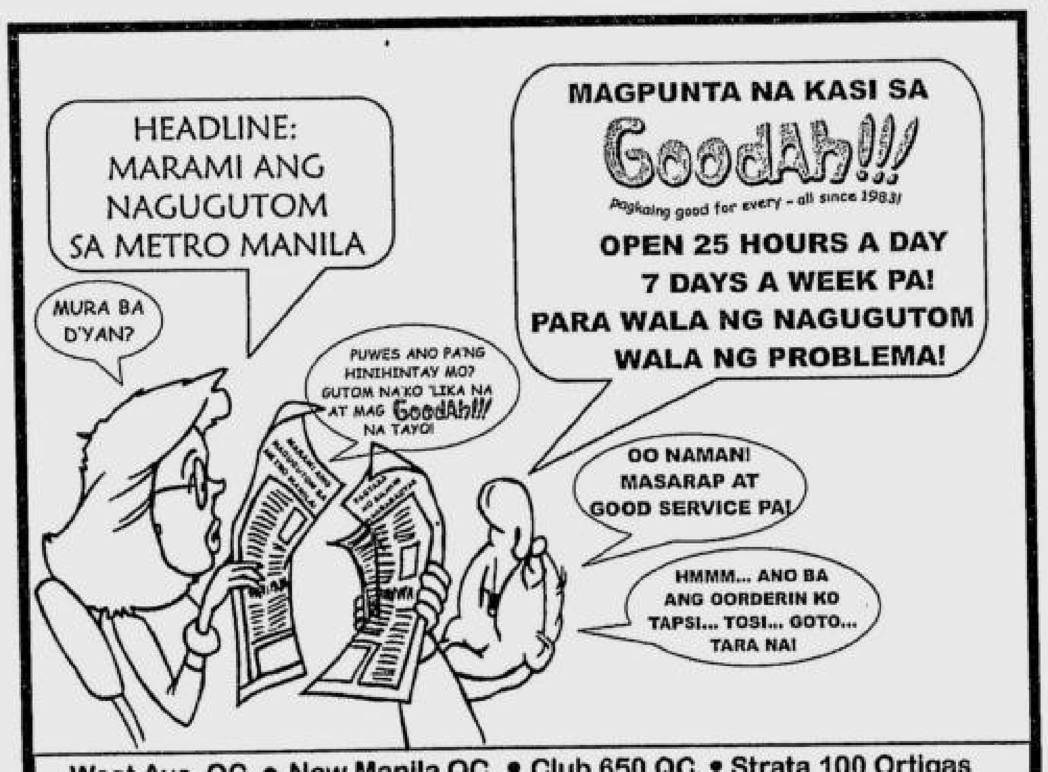
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Consultation with fisherfolk in Binangonan

THE ASIAN SOCIAL Institute (ASI) is scheduled to hold today a one-day consultation with some 150 leaders of fisherfolk, indigenous groups, upland and lowland farmers of Binangonan and Cardona towns in Rizal.

ASI and a group of community leaders have initiated a program entitled "Co-creating sustainable bio-regional communities" (CSB com). The local organization partners are the family organization "Kapitbahayan," the Lummacar (Lupon ng mga Magsasaka at Mangingisda ng Cardona, Rizal) and leaders and members of Calariz—an organization of Cavite, Laguna and Rizal fisherfolk who were trained by the ASI and are now helping protect the marine resources in the three provinces.

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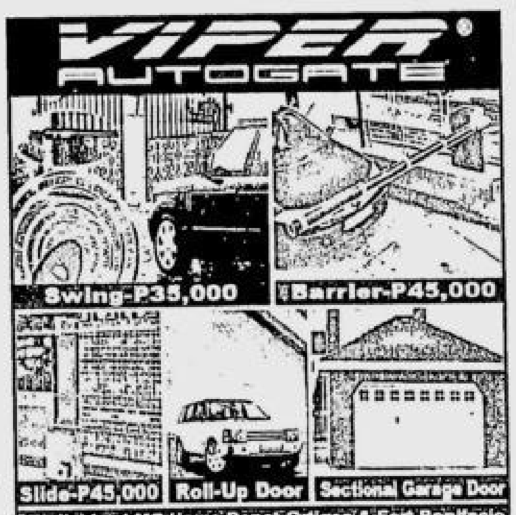

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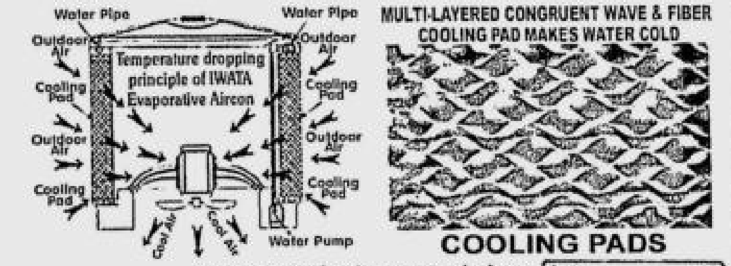
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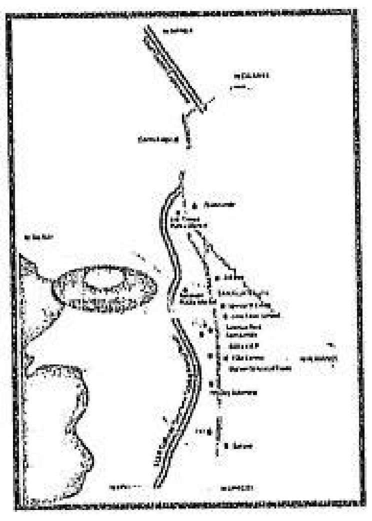
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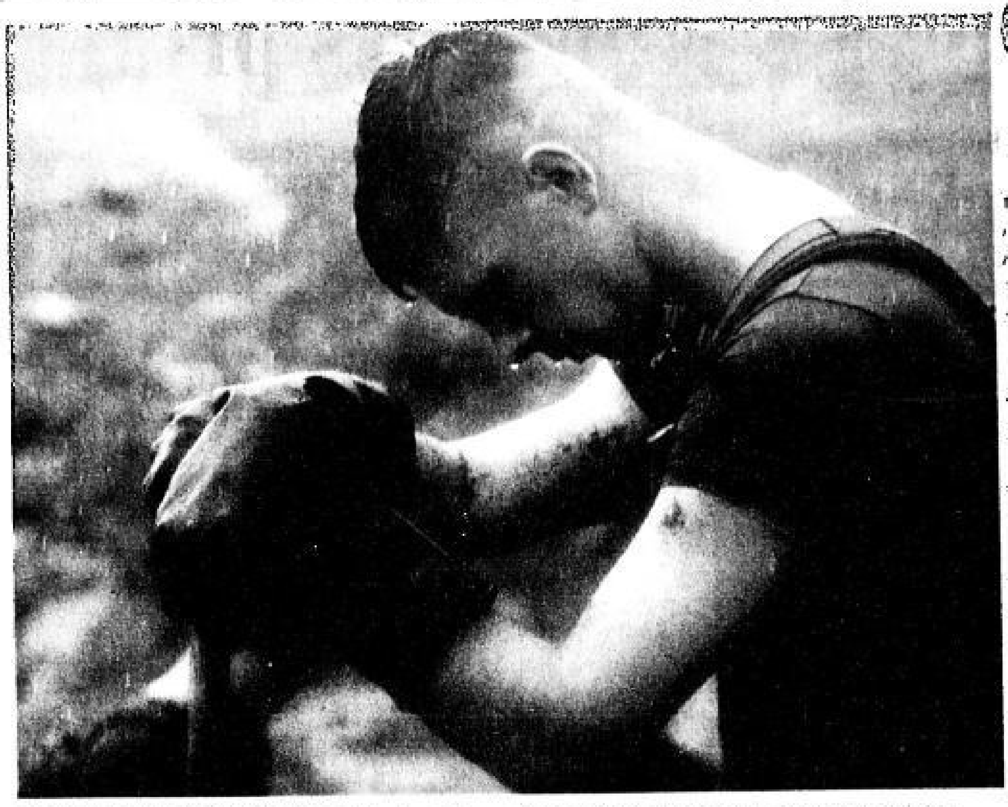

MAN WITH A SHOVEL: A US Marine takes a break during a clearing operation of the debris left by the landslide that buried a whole barangay in St. Bernard, Southern Leyte.

REM ZAMORA

PDI photog wins 2 Asia media awards

From page A1

groups at Chino Roces (Mendiola) Bridge on June 9, 2006, won the Best in General News Photography award.

Only Zamora's entries won from among the Philippine newspapers and magazines that participated in the competitions for media in the Asia-Pacific region.

Hundreds of publications in the region joined the contest designed to promote the highest standards of publishing and creativity in the industry.

The awards were handed out Wednesday night.

The Guinsaugon photos showed American, Taiwanese and Spanish rescuers clearing a mountain of mud in order to build a road for bulldozers and rescue vehicles.

Dangerous coverage

"It was a dangerous coverage. I was hiking through soft earth that had just caved in," said Zamora.

He recalled that another INQUIRER photographer, Edwin Bacasmas, was half buried in mud for almost a day until rescuers found him. He said the incident remained fresh in his mind.

"I was ahead of the rescuers in going to Ground Zero, where hundreds of students were buried by the landslide. It was raining heavily," Zamora said.

His coverage in Guinsaugon lasted three days. He then proceeded to Manila, to reinforce the INQUIRER team covering a rash of protest rallies.

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Ducat's daughters proud; school rallies behind the man

By TJ Burgonio

A DAY AFTER ARMANDO DUCAT JR. WAS hauled off to jail after taking 26 children hostage, his three young daughters pleaded for understanding of the man who they said was only fighting for the cause of the poor.

As the 56-year-old engineer pondered his future in his detention cell, pupils and their parents gathered in front of his daycare center in a slum barangay in Manila, and urged President Macapagal-Arroyo to free him.

Ducat is facing a string of charges. *(Story on Page A1.)*

"I really hope they would support Papa, and pray for him. I also hope they will understand that what he did was for the Filipino people, and not just for his family," Juneva Ducat, 16, said in an appeal to the public.

BF Resort Village

Juneva and her younger sisters Jona Marie, 15, and Jemya, 11, faced the INQUIRER in their cozy, well-furnished home in BF Resort Village, a middle-class subdivision in Las Piñas City, surprisingly cheerful.

At that time, their mother Eva and brother Armando III, 13, were not around.

Huddled together on a mint-green sofa in their living room, they spoke highly of their father's philanthropy, concern for the poor and desire to pluck them out of poverty.

"We were worried by what he did, but we're proud of him. He was fighting for the right cause. That wasn't for us; that was for the poor, and the youth who can't afford to go to school because of poverty," said Juneva, an incoming high school senior at the Mary Immaculate Parish Special School.

Giving food on Christmas

They said their father would bring them along whenever he drove to the family-owned Musmos Daycare Center in Parola, Manila, and to an informal settlers' area near their subdivision in Las Piñas to distribute food during Christmas and at the end of school year.

"He would often tell us that he was willing to sacrifice his own life just for the poor," Juneva said. "Helping the poor is natural to him."

Armando's four children by Eva got wind of the hostage-taking while they were in school.

They tuned in to their car's radio to monitor the blow-by-blow accounts before being driven to the Manila Police District headquarters, where their father was detained.

A motley crowd of children, their parents and residents gathered in a basketball court facing the two-story Musmos Daycare Center in the crowded Parola compound to demand Ducat's freedom.

It all started when a clutch of shirtless young boys waved a poster with the message "Free Ducat" from the window of the center's upper floor, and chanted "Release Ducat!"

Candles lit

As if on cue, six teenaged boys strode into the covered court holding aloft posters appealing to the President to release the detained daycare owner, and the huge crowd erupted into chants of "Free Ducat!"

Within minutes, candles were lit and placed in front of the schoolchildren who had huddled at the court in their white uniforms, and a CD on Ducat's life story was played on a videoke machine in a house just across the daycare center.

"As far as we're concerned, no charges should be filed against. He should be freed. He was just calling on the politicians to spend their millions on the poor," said Jess del Prado, chair of the League of Urban Poor for Action working with the poor in the barangay.

"That's why our appeal is for the President to heed Ducat's calls, and help us the poor people," he said.

In the daycare center set up by Ducat two years ago and painted in cheerful light blue, the announcement on the children's educational field trip to Tagaytay was still scrawled on the blackboards on the ground and upper floors.

But as per the announcement, some 50 schoolchildren had enlisted to join the trip set for last Tuesday, not Wednesday.

Of the original 300 that enrolled last year, only 145 completed Kindergarten 1 and 2, and Nursery at the end of the school year last week.

Accomplishments

Residents of Parola couldn't care less if the hostage-taking was a publicity stunt. "If it were a publicity stunt, that's OK with us. If he runs, we will support him. Even if he were not in power, he was able to help us. How much more when he is in power," said Susan Molina, who showed up with daughter Trixie at the gathering of parents and daycare children at the basketball court.

The residents said Ducat provided the schoolchildren with free education as well as school supplies.

Ducat's other accomplishments in Barangay 275, including his fogging operation, and roofing and gift-giving programs, are listed on a poster hanging from the facade of the daycare center put up by barangay officials as a form of gratitude.

Emotional damage minimal, says DSWD Secretary Cabral

By Jocelyn R. Uy

DON'T TALK TOO MUCH ABOUT IT. But if necessary, discuss the matter the way one would explain sex to a child.

The Department of Social Welfare and Development gave this advice yesterday to the parents of the children held hostage for 10 hours on Wednesday.

Initial results of the stress debriefing session with the 26 children on Wednesday night showed that the hostage-taking inflicted on them insignificant or minimal emotional damage, Social Welfare Secretary Esperanza Cabral said at a press conference.

Cabral said that while the kids would most likely forget the experience, their parents should not expose them to an environment that would bombard them with questions about it.

But should the need arise to explain things over, the parents must be cautious with their words.

"It's like explaining sex to a child. They must explain in terms that children can understand, and in a very non-threatening way," Cabral said.

4 to go thru more sessions

"I think when they are older, they would forget about it because they were not physically harmed. They were not threatened verbally, they did not go hungry, they had toys to play with, and adults whom they trust were with them," she said.

Of the children given stress debriefing services by social workers, four will undergo another session.

But Cabral said it had yet to be determined whether the four were naturally quiet or were just tired and sleepy during the debriefing.

All the children will also be under regular observation by social workers for four weeks.

Cabral encouraged the parents to immediately seek help should they observe behavioral changes in their children.

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April 8 - Sunday
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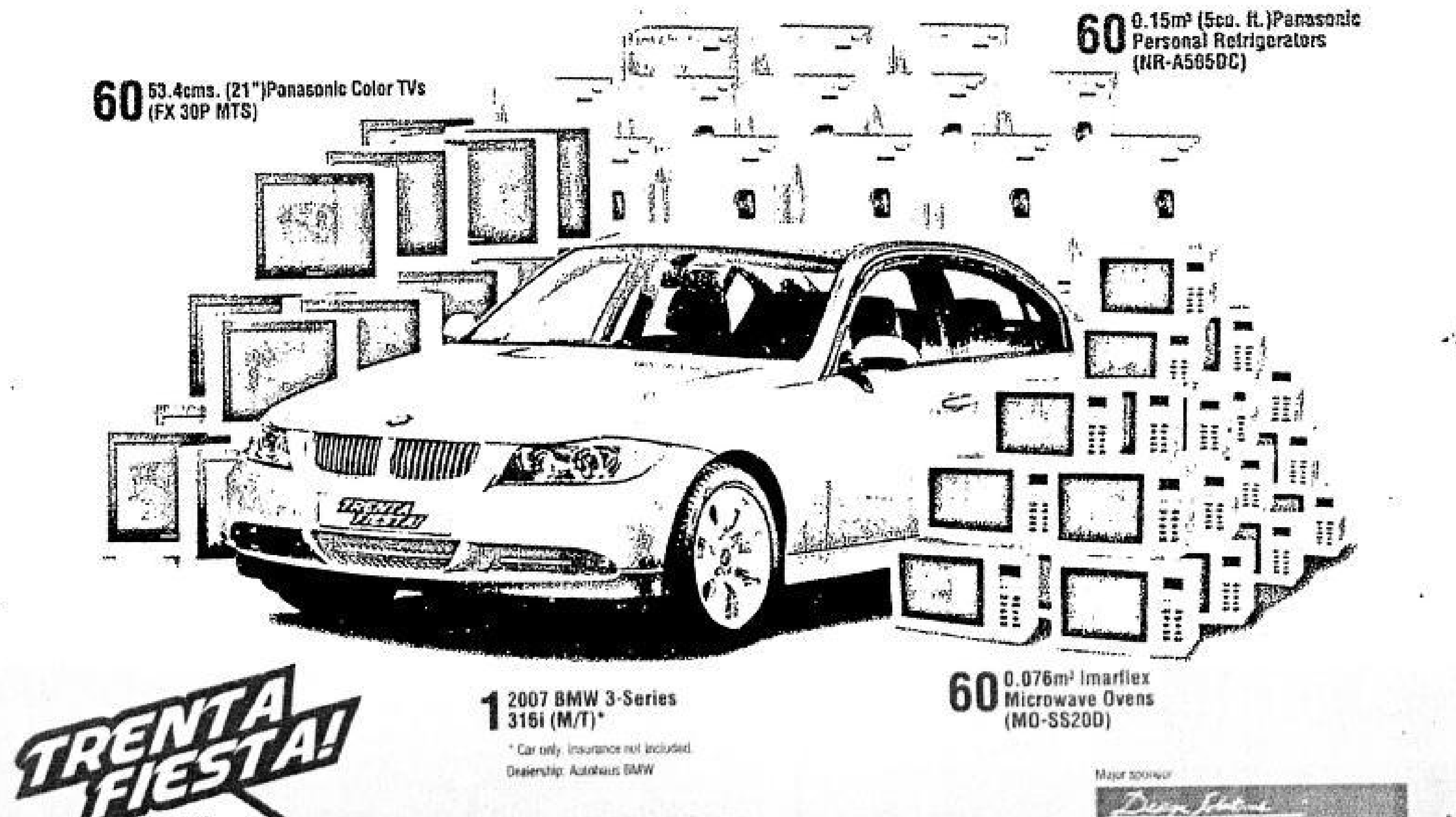

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ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL WITH REGARD TO the hostage-taking in Manila last Wednesday. But it happened soon after another hostage-taking by a movie stunt man in a courtroom in Taguig. Both incidents point to a problem that, we are afraid, seems to have emerged: hostage-taking as a profitable media stunt. This can only make us anxious about public safety.

EDITORIAL

The hostage-taker, Armando Ducat, received everything he wanted, and he received it so freely, and so willingly, that after one demand would be met he would come up with another. This sends a message that is all the more dangerous because it's so powerful: ask at gunpoint, and it shall be handed to you.

We believe it's in everyone's interest, for our police authorities to sit down with representatives of the mass media—radio and television, especially—to clarify the protocols that should be observed during hostage situations. A signal needs to be sent that should future incidents of this nature happen again, hostage-takers will not have media attention handed to them on a silver platter. Specifically, not when they have hostages at their mercy. As veteran journalist Vergel Santos pointed out, in such situations, the media's job is to report, not to play negotiator or to broadcast negotiations.

The police, too, need to put the politicians in their place. The police have people who have received the most up-to-date training on hostage situations, and they should be the ones calling the shots. The risk of well-meaning or simply publicity-hungry politicians barging into the scene is too great; it should never be allowed to happen again. Sen. Ramon Revilla, Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson and Ambassador Amable Aguiluz do not deserve any credit whatsoever for trying to get into the act. They deserve condemnation for needlessly complicating and drawing out matters, although for the two politicos, the police deserve criticism for using the former and failing to stop the latter.

And it is wrong to project Ducat as a hero. To be sure, some of the things he said struck a sympathetic chord with many people. But whatever he said was beside the point. The central issue during the 10 long hours that he held 26 children hostage was the monstrous act he was committing, and the risks the children faced during the entire episode.

The world was itching for news of what was going on, and the media exerted every effort to satisfy the public demand. A news frenzy ensued. And yet we have to note that public safety demands a tighter control over the vicinity of the hostage-taking. By mid-afternoon, not only the media but also police authorities and even the public were in such close proximity to the bus where the hostages were being held that observers could have literally touched the bus. And of course, the last few minutes of the whole incident had police, press and public jostling around the bus to the extent that the hostages had a hard time exiting the vehicle.

What needs to be addressed first and foremost, however, by the authorities is that this incident hasn't established precedents for publicity-seekers to use and abuse in the future. This will require a common perspective being adopted by the public, officialdom and the police. The last thing this country needs is an epidemic of hostage-taking. For it simply won't do anyone any good to have what happened repeated—this time as a bloody tragedy. The only result will not only be the usual finger-pointing, but lost lives. And no one, next time, can say they didn't know any better.

Just as wrong would be to focus on what happened purely as an embarrassment to the country. That would be to confuse superficial things with the things that really matter. There is something very, very wrong with how we handle crisis procedures. That's cause for embarrassment, because it's been perfected into a life-saving science elsewhere and yet for nearly a day the country was flying by the seat of its pants.

Recognition

WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE YET ANOTHER POLITICAL BLUNDER by the Bush administration if it once again rejects a government the Palestinians themselves have negotiated. There are limits on the condescending disenfranchising of a people.

FOREIGN COMMENT

Recognition of a government, of course, does not mean that one agrees with all it does. We have few illusions about Hamas and its intentions. But we are convinced that a continued international boycott will just stimulate fundamental and radical forces that will always oppose any peace settlement.

Aftenposten (Oslo, Norway)

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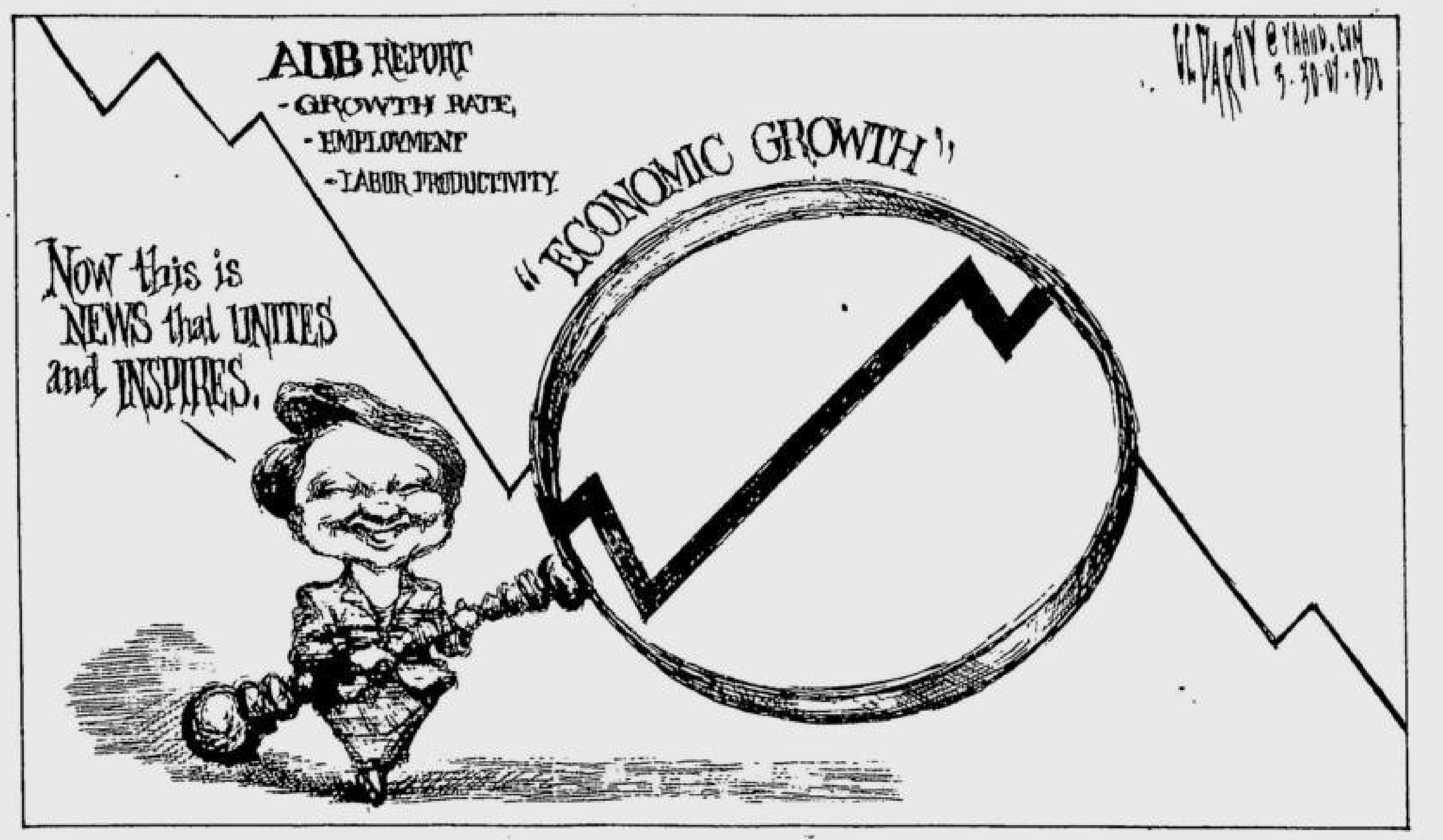


A frame-up and miscarriage of justice in Manila

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

IN THE OLD AMERICAN WILD WEST, WHEN outlaws terrorized the towns, the town fathers fought back by offering bounties for the outlaws, dead or alive. A new breed of gunslingers was born: the bounty hunters. They tracked down outlaws and brought them back to town, usually dead, and collected the reward money. In some cases, they brought back the wrong man, but since the man was already dead and couldn't protest, it didn't make much difference. Some historians say the bounty hunters contributed to the taming of the West, but others say they also contributed to miscarriage of justice.

In this modern age, we still have vestiges of this Wild West practice. Governments, including our own, still offer bounties for criminals. In fact, it seems to be the favored crime-fighting tool. Several million pesos was paid for the alleged death of the Abu Sayyaf chieftain. When the police cannot catch a suspect in a high-profile case, the President or the mayor offers millions of pesos in bounty for the suspect and imposes a deadline for the police to solve the case. But as in the old days, this practice sometimes results in a miscarriage of justice. Here is one such case:

At 9:15 a.m. on Oct. 18, 2004, Supt. Manolo de Guzman Martinez, commander of the Sta. Mesa Police Station, was shot dead right in front of his headquarters. Two others were wounded.

A police commander gunned down beside his own headquarters in broad daylight? That was an insult to the whole police force. An angry Manila Mayor Lito Atienza offered a P1-million reward for information leading to the arrest of the killers and gave the police 48 hours to solve the case.

Before the deadline was up, the police produced a witness, Francis Castro Abayuan, who signed an affidavit pointing to his neighbor, June Felizardo, as the gunman. Felizardo was arrested and jailed, and murder and frustrated murder charges were filed against him.

Case solved? No; they got the wrong man.

The poor man was tortured by the police to force him to confess, but he maintained his innocence. He languished in jail for more than two years and was almost killed twice before the truth came out.

Felizardo was a barbecue vendor. At the time Martinez was killed, Felizardo was at his brother's house in San Jose del Monte, Bulacan, to get a pair of shoes for his daughter.

The principal witness, who identified himself as Francis Abayuan, turned out to be somebody else. His real name is Jonathan Prestado.

On March 17, 2005, Prestado recanted his testimony and submitted a new sworn statement before Assistant City Prosecutor Armando Velasco. In his new statement, Prestado said that he was only forced to use and sign the name Francis Abayuan by the police.

According to the decision of Judge Zenaida R. Daguna of the Manila Regional Trial Court, Prestado claimed that "while in the office of Col. Juanito Ibay, a prepared statement of a person named Francis Abayuan was shown to him. They told him to sign it because it will be used at the Prosecutor's Office, so he signed the document which is fake."

He was also told earlier that Felizardo "will be presented to the media by Mayor Atienza in order not to break his promise (and Felizardo) will be sent home thereafter." He learned later "that they proceeded with the case against June. He kept silent because (the police) told him to do so, or else he will be the one sacrificed."

During cross-examination on Feb. 8, 2006, Prestado was asked if he was threatened to sign the document. His answer: "They told me *'kesa ikaw naman ang mapasama sa amin. Magkakapera ka rin naman* because we will be the one to get the reward from Mayor Atienza.'"

In a later exchange:

"Question: When you implicated the accused, June Felizardo, in the killing of Col. Manolo Martinez, what other arrangements did you have with Colonel Ibay, if any?

"Answer: If the plan gets smooth, sir, and they will get the P1-million reward, there will be no turning back, *'walang talikuran.'*"

The judge concluded: "The two reasons why Francis Abayuan (aka Jonathan Prestado) signed the statement are clear. First, he was threatened; second they wanted to get the reward offered by Mayor Atienza."

In other words, Felizardo was a fall guy.

His family went to Sen. Alfredo Lim for help and Lim gave two lawyers. Being a former policeman, Lim knew what sometimes happens to fall guys. He called then Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes to warn him that Felizardo's life was in danger inside the city jail. True enough, Felizardo was stabbed in the neck and almost killed.

Lim called Reyes again to suggest that Felizardo be kept in another jail. So he was sent to Bicutan and kept with members of the Abu Sayyaf. Not long after, the Abu Sayyaf members were all killed by the police in an alleged escape attempt. Felizardo, who was in the same cell, survived by crawling under a bed and playing dead.

Felizardo's story was also told to me by Lim twice before he was acquitted by the court. After more than two years in jail for a crime he did not commit, the court finally acquitted Felizardo and ordered his release.

Case closed? Not quite. Aren't persons falsely accused and imprisoned entitled to damages? What will be done to the policemen who framed up Felizardo? Was the P1-million reward collected? Who got it?

Ritualizing the faith

PASSION FOR REASON

Raul C. Pangalangan

EACH TIME I EXPERIENCE HOLY WEEK IN A foreign land, I can't help but notice the contrasts between us and non-Filipino Christians. To start with, for many of them, the high point is usually Easter Sunday, not Good Friday. Indeed, more than 100 countries celebrate Easter Monday as well, I suppose to give everyone time to either travel home from family gatherings or recover from the past day's festivities. It is significant, don't you think, that we define ourselves in terms of what happened in Calvary rather than what transpired at Christ's resurrection? Whoever wrote, "No pain, no gain," must have been influenced by a Filipino, who would endure much more pain in exchange for just a little gain.

Also, Pinoys are amazed to learn that other societies do not shut down virtually for the entire week before Easter. Come to think of it, those infidels don't even bother to call it Holy Week! In the United States, Maundy Thursday and Good Friday are not federal holidays, because they keep faith with the secular nature of their republic, and people go about as if it were just another working day. I checked out the Internet, and discovered that each entry for Good Friday celebrations typically has a separate paragraph on the Philippines. I reproduce them verbatim:

"In the predominantly Catholic Philippines, the day is commemorated with street processions, the Way of the Cross, and a Passion play called the Sinakulo. The church[es] keep the day solemn by not tolling the church bells and no Mass will be celebrated. In some communities (most famously in San Fernando, Pampanga), the processions include devotees who self-flagellate and sometimes even have themselves nailed to crosses as expressions of penance. After three o'clock in the afternoon of Good Friday (the time at which Jesus is traditionally believed to have died), noise is discouraged, radio stations and television stations sign off, businesses automatically close, and the faithful are urged to keep a solemn and prayerful disposition through Easter Sunday."

Another site said: "[T]he morning of Easter (known in the national language as "Pasko ng Muling Pagkabuhay" or the Pasch of the Resurrection) is marked with joyous celebration, the first being the dawn 'Salubong,' wherein large statues of Jesus and Mary are brought together to meet, imagining the first reunion of Jesus and his mother Mary after Jesus' Resurrection. This is followed by the joyous Easter Mass."

There you have it. Some nations are known for having sent the first men to outer space, others for producing the finest works of music, and we, well, we have evolved rather elaborate if painful rituals that have earned us one or two encyclopedia entries.

But we are not alone. *Hindi tayo nag-iisa.* Other Protestant communities hold special services on this day as well. Another website says: "In the German Lutheran tradition from the 16th to the 20th century, this was the most important holiday, and abstention from all worldly works was expected. Lutheranism has no restrictions on the celebration of Holy Communion on Good Friday; on the contrary, it was the prime day on which to receive Holy Communion, and services were often accentuated by special music such as the St. Matthew Passion by [the] Lutheran Johann Sebastian Bach."

Speaking of the spirit of sacrifice, in similarly Catholic Ireland, selling alcohol is prohibited on Good Friday (and from what I hear of the Irish, that must be the most trying act of self-denial). Filipinos, of course, follow priestly teachings literally; the Bible tells us to abstain from meat, so in the spirit of Calvary, we order the *insalata marinara* for our *primo piatto*, and the fried calamari for our *segundo piatto*, and cap the meal with a truly vegetarian chocolate mousse and cappuccino, named, I suppose, after the Capuchin followers of St. Francis of Assisi. And since the menu is all in Italian, we can actually sound holy the whole time.

My wife and I tell our kids that in our time eons ago, before cable TV was invented, for the last three days before Easter, there were no cartoons or movies on TV nor happy music on the radio. Nowadays, it is difficult to feel solemn during the season because even if the local stations were to be dutifully subdued, the foreign cable channels would nonchalantly go about their merry way oblivious of their devout brethren in the Philippine Islands.

But that should underscore for us the essence of our faith in the early 21st century. Globalization and technology finally compel us to face one truth: To believe is to choose. As recently as 30 years ago, to believe was a duty, one enforced by a stern and vengeful God, who punished and rewarded—and reinforced by a Newtonian science that spared us only scant liberty on what we could watch and enjoy.

And then some time in the 1980s, faith became a friendship with an egalitarian God, a personalized deity, a buddy with whom we exchanged favors and promises. Today, we preach the faith to yet a new generation, inured to unlimited choices at the flick of a finger, indeed, of a thumb. The limits of the physical world are easily transcended in the virtual world of computers and the Internet, and all of a sudden, those religious mysteries, about things omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent, that we used to swear by as faith, are more easily imaginable as fact.

As we break for the Lenten holidays, let us turn away from a Catholicism of ritual and, worse, of ceremony as the cache of middle-class respectability, and instead let the true meaning of Lent bare itself in solitude, silence and simplicity.

A long history of hostage-taking

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila

THE HOSTAGE-TAKING OF 26 CHILDREN, wards of a Tondo day care center, ended with their release unharmed after 10 hours of horror, but not before it riveted the attention of the world. The drama near Manila City Hall became part of a universal human experience played out before the eyes of millions in homes and places of work by TV cameras of the global networks of BBC, CNN, YouTube, and the Arabic TV station Al-Jazeera.

Although the episode shocked Filipinos as well as it did other citizens of the world, it was not entirely unexpected. The Philippines has a long history of hostage-taking, ranging from the kidnap for ransom of wealthy Chinese-Filipinos to the seizure in June 2001 of missionaries Martin and Gracia Burnham together with some Filipinos by the Abu Sayyaf in a tourist resort in Palawan.

What made the hostage-taking in Manila this week reprehensible and outrageous was that the victims were children, the most vulnerable and defenseless specie of the human race. Almost every day, mayhem takes place in Iraq, where terrorist attacks take a toll of foreign soldiers occupying that country and journalists and protagonists (between Shi'ites and Sunni militants) are being held and tortured. Only last Friday, Iranian forces seized 15 British naval personnel, including one woman, patrolling the Shatt-al-Arab waterway between Iran and Iraq. They were attached to the HMS Cornwall. Iran claims that the British had strayed into Iranian waters, and the British insist that their sailors were kidnapped in Iraqi waters. The hostages are now being used as leverage by Iran to ease United Nations sanctions to halt Iran's nuclear weapons development program. The seizure in the Persian Gulf has strategic geopolitical implications.

The Abu Sayyaf seized its hostages to send the political message that it was not a spent force in the Muslim separatist movement in Southern Philippines and, just as importantly, to extract ransom to sustain its terrorist actions.

In none of these situations were children victimized. The surest way to alienate broad support for a cause is to touch innocent children, the bottom line of uncivilized behavior in war or any conflict. Hostage-taking comes with different motivations, but the seizure of the 26 children by Armando Ducat, owner of the child care center in Parola, Tondo, had none of the burning motivations that drove Islamist terrorists to hijack aircraft to crash into the World Trade Center twin towers on Sept. 11, 2003. The Islamist terrorists of Osama bin-Laden bombed the towers, motivated by the desire to avenge centuries-old grievances and resentment against alleged Western wrongs on Islam, dating back to the Christian crusades of the 11th century.

The Manila episode was bizarre. Ducat painted the seizure of children, over which he had responsibility, with a veneer of idealism and civic conscience. In melodramatic fashion, he used the children as pawns to call attention to so much corruption, and to grinding poverty. "While generations of politicians change, we continue to suffer in poverty," he said. These politicians promise education, health and housing, he said, "but unless we stop corruption ... they will just feast on the budget."

No matter the claims of a lofty purpose, Ducat's action had the marks of aberrant behavior. Ducat has a history of staging stunts to grab attention.

He made the specific demand that his pupils receive "education up to college," a demand that was met by the undertaking of Amable Aguiluz, head of a computer-training school, to provide the scholarships. In the end, the benefit was limited to Ducat's pupils, not systemic in scope.

Since Ducat did not single out any politician for blame, the Arroyo administration squeezed through the incident unscathed, except for the embarrassment caused by the fact that the incident broke out in the midst of a Publish Asia conference attended by publishers and editors of regional media, in which she had delivered the keynote speech.

Although the children escaped unharmed, taking them hostages to right social wrongs was terrorism no less outrageous and despicable than the violent attacks of Islamist extremists. Ducat wrote a note attached to a hand grenade saying, "Let the candles be a warning. If the promises remain unfulfilled, you will see those candles again." He gave the note to Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis Singson, while putting the pin back on the grenade he was holding, before he surrendered.

His assistant was armed with a handgun, an Uzi automatic rifle and two grenades. Any of these weapons could have gone off if the police had been less prudent in handling the standoff.

Whether it was the 9/11 bombing, the Abu Sayyaf seizure or the Persian Gulf kidnapping of British sailors, all these actions had a single hallmark: they were meant to extract concessions at gunpoint. It was even worse in Manila. Wars tend to spread out its carnage across combatants and civilians, but only in rare cases have children been used as hostages. Only in the Philippines have children been picked to be used as pawns to leverage demands for reforms.

At the Publish Asia conference, a journalist from South India said he had not expected such an event to happen in the Philippines. "It's more routine in the United States, which is full of crazies," he explained. "He has to be mentally off. No sane man would do such a thing."

It leads to surprises to discount such aberrations happening in the Philippines.

Instant celebrity

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

THERE ARE SO MANY WAYS TO REACT TO Wednesday's hostage-taking. One is to acknowledge the "validity" of the causes espoused by Armando Ducat, the hostage-taker. And who, in all honesty, could disagree with him? Who doesn't believe that the children of the poor deserve a good education? Who isn't frustrated at the sluggish pace of reform and the dominance of graft and corruption in government? Who doesn't want government officials—the high and the mighty of the land—to pay attention to a lowly citizen, to listen to him, to promise him what he wants?

Even the parents and grandparents of the preschool children kept for over 10 hours inside a stifling bus in the middle of a scorching summer day couldn't bring themselves to condemn Ducat and his co-conspirators, saying they were good men who only had their—the poor of Tondo—interests at heart. Even the children, many of whom appeared to be blissfully unaware of the mortal danger they had been in, showed respect and even gratitude to the man who had gambled with their lives. As each child exited the bus, each gave Ducat a kiss, as if to thank him for their short-lived "field trip."

Police authorities have threatened to slap Ducat and Cesar Carbonnel, described as a "follower" of Ducat, with the highest penalties the law would allow, possibly a life term in prison for wielding illegal weapons, defying a "gun ban" during an electoral campaign season, and holding young children hostage. Ducat has said he is "ready" to face the music, no matter how harsh. But you know, given Ducat's past brushes with the law, and the number of friends he has in high places, I'm not holding my breath on this.

* * *

WHAT'S really shocking is how easily Ducat insinuated himself back into polite society even after pulling stunts that would have earned for any other man the label of lunatic—or dangerous felon.

Last 2001, he made a "citizen's arrest" of two BIR personnel who, he said, had been extorting Korean companies in Cavite.

In 1995, he climbed to the top of the Mabuhay Rotonda that marks the boundary between Manila and Quezon City and staged a "hunger fast" there, urging voters to reject candidates with Chinese blood in protest of alleged Chinese control of the rice trade.

Six years before, in 1989, he held hostage two priests in Sta. Cruz, Manila, over what he claimed to be unpaid claims in a construction project. Nothing came out of that incident, mainly because the two priest-hostages chose not to pursue the case, but one hostage, who had been considered an up-and-coming cleric, was so traumatized by being held hostage with a grenade-wielding man that he chose to work as a foreign missionary.

You would think that after numerous publicity stunts—no matter how grounded in "good" causes—society would shun Ducat. But instead, parents of poor children in Tondo trusted him enough to send their youngsters to a pre-school he founded, and perhaps even happily sent them away on a bus with him as they left for what was billed as a field trip.

* * *

WHAT will now happen to the children—who were held hostage for 10 hours as crowds and media teemed outside the bus—after their release? Psychiatrists and officials of the Ospital ng Lungsod ng Maynila were singing a common song: many of them didn't seem to have been traumatized at all, and were in fact laughing and wolfing down fried chicken.

But will a psychological de-briefing, which one doctor described as "emotional first-aid" for people possibly undergoing post-traumatic stress syndrome, be enough to protect the children from flashbacks? Will they ever regain the sense of trust and belief in adults that Ducat, by brandishing his grenades and long arms in their faces, single-handedly destroyed?

There are many forms of child abuse, and frightening children and putting their lives at risk has to be one of them.

Ducat is reported to have removed the pin from the grenades he was clutching and threatened to blow up not just himself but the entire busload of children and teachers if his demands were ignored. Even if he "loved" the children, as he claimed again and again, Ducat definitely put their lives at risk. All he had to do was relax his grip on the grenades, or stumble, or even suffer a heart attack, and all that love would have gone up in shrapnel and bloodied, dead children.

If the hostage-taking ended well, it was only because of a forgiving God and vigilant guardian angels. As long as Ducat exercised his power and will over the children, he was putting their lives at risk.

* * *

ONE reason I can see why a recidivist like Ducat would pull stunts like Wednesday's is that such incidents always earned him what he seems to crave above all: public attention.

Sen. Alfredo Lim, who is making a return bid to be mayor of Manila, said Ducat "merely finds joy in being interviewed." And certainly, last Wednesday, there was more than enough to bring Ducat to the heights of ecstasy. He had the complete attention not just of local reporters and broadcasters, but even of the world's media. When I checked with CNN, they had the camera frozen on the children looking out of the bus' curtains. The host was even interviewing an FBI consultant on hostage negotiations. Perhaps it was a slow news day worldwide.

Certainly, given that his twisted mind seems to find gratification only when he is in the public eye, even life imprisonment is small punishment for Ducat, having been rewarded with the richest purse any aspirant for celebrityhood could crave for. No need to pose nude or sleep with celebrities. All you have to do is take a busload of children as hostages—and you have more than your 15 minutes of fame.

Name recall

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo

EVERY TIME SOMEONE MAKES THE MISTAKE of introducing me as "Ambet Antonio," I flinch. It is no joke to be confused with a man with a criminal record.

I used to think my professional name was quite unique and always laughed when, like Recah Trinidad, people who didn't know me presumed that I was female. It must be the "h" but then some names like Bhoy or Bhen remain masculine despite the "h."

When the news broke out that Ambet Antonio had shot someone, journalists, especially those on radio, had a field day playing with our names.. To make matters worse, the INQUIRER committed the same mistake. When I came to collect my mail, some of the editors laughed as they apologized. One even consoled me with the thought that I could run for public office simply because I had name recall.

When people go into the polling booth to vote next month, they will be provided with a ballot and a long list of official candidates from which they will draw a dozen senators. Looking at those names, the whole idea of name recall makes sense to me. Having a name with historical resonance, like Magsaysay on the 50th anniversary of Ramon Magsaysay's death, should do the trick. This also explains why Teresita Aquino-Oreta and her nephew Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino had to sort out the issue of who would use the magic Aquino name.

To complicate things further, voters will also have to navigate through an even longer and very wordy list of party-list groups. Some months back, before Danton Remoto was declared a nuisance candidate by the Commission on Elections, a friend was convincing us to support the gay, lesbian and transgender party-list Ladlad. Then we were informed that a similar group was being formed carrying the brand name of a popular lollipop. In an alphabetical listing of parties, Ladlad could not have competed with a rude word that begins with "C." So Ladlad added a word and became "Ang Ladlad." Trust an English professor to come up with that solution.

The same strategy was used by Samahan ng mga Mangangalakal para sa Ikauunlad ng Local na Ekonomiya (SMILE), which would have been buried at the bottom. It renamed itself Ang Samahan ng mga Mangangalakal para sa Ikauunlad ng Local na Ekonomiya (A SMILE) and moved up significantly, but not enough to dislodge a transport coalition that would have been at the bottom of the list if they used United Transport Koalisyon or UTAK, so it had to be renamed 1-UTAK and and it now heads the list of party-list groups.

More cunning were the AA-KASOSYO Party and Aangat Tayo (AT). Some people are indeed smarter than others. The teachers' group formerly known as Advocates and Adherents of Social Justice for School Teachers and Allied Workers tried to get ahead by calling themselves ABAKADA GURO, but only ended up fourth on the list. Five notches below this you have Advocacy for Teacher Empowerment Through Action Cooperation and Harmony Towards Educational Reforms (A TEACHER). How corny can one get?

If Abanse! Pinay rings a bell, what about Abante Ilongo? Or ABONO? I don't know what marginalized group Abono represents, but if we go by its name, it can either mean fertilizer or those who advance money.

There is a group that calls itself Action for Dynamic Development (ADD) whose ranking was stolen by Action for Democracy and Development for the Tribal People (ADD-TRIBAL).

Then there are groups seeking to represent the handicapped like Advocates for Special Children and the Handicapped Movement (ASAHAN MO) and Alyansa ng may Kapansanang Pinoy (AKAPIN). If you need more hugs, you can try You Against Corruption and Poverty (YACAP), and if you want to fly, then try Youth League for Peace Advancement (LYPAD).

The above reminds me of other acronyms like: National Artist Award (NAAWA), which has, for obvious reasons, since been changed to NAAW; Alliance of Concerned Teachers (ACT), the now dormant Cultural Research Association of the Philippines (CRAP), and artist Roberto Chabet's UP Fine Arts Running Team (FART).

Have you heard the story behind the naming of the theological school of the Jesuit-run Ateneo de Manila University? Jesuits have a devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, so the school on the drawing board was originally called Sacred Heart Institute of Theology. But the acronym spelled something else, and thus was born the Loyola House of Studies (LHS).

Back to straightforward party-list groups: Alyansa ng Sambayanan Para sa Pagbabago (ASAP); Anak Mindanao (AMIN); Association of the Philippines Electric cooperatives (APEC); Democratic Independent Workers Association (DIWA); Koalisyon ng Katutubong Samahan ng Pilipinas (KASAPI); Pwersa ng Bayaning Atleta (PBA), and Hanay ng Aping Pinoy (HAPI). Then there are groups whose names have double meanings or sexual undertones like Barangay Association for National Advancement of Transparency (BANAT); Citizens Battle Against Corruption (CIBAC), Bagong Tao Movement (BTM), and Sandigang Maralita (SM).

There are different shades and meanings to these seemingly innocent party-list names, so much resonance in the names that I can only wonder what a future historian, armed with hindsight and perspective, will see and conclude about the interesting times we live in.

* * *

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu

Much, little

PINOY KASI

Michael L. Tan

AN AMERICAN FRIEND OF MINE, RAILING ABOUT OUR poor sense of time, finally exclaimed: "Even your roosters can't get their crowing right."

I was tempted to agree, having tossed and turned through the night because of neighbors who keep battalions of fighting cocks that *ti-ti-la-ok* at 2 or 3 in the morning, rather than around sunrise. But you know, I suspect their crowing time is actually an adaptation to us humans. The birds stir when there's movement in households, and that can start very early in the morning.

It's not just farmers and rural people who start their day early. Our urban areas buzz with activity long before the sun rises. How early? Go to any of our wet markets and you'll find vendors coming in with their fish, meat, vegetables and fruits at 3 or 4 a.m. And if you think that's early, many of them have already gone to their suppliers, who start even earlier.

Dawn to dusk

The middle class thinks the poor are indolent, but try visiting the slums and you'll be amazed at the work that goes on, way before dawn and long after dusk. I'll describe the working activities in a typical day, pieced together from my field notes:

At 6 a.m., the *sari-sari* stores are already open. Sometimes even earlier than that, you'll find parents bringing their children to school. They do this because it takes so long to commute to the schools, and also because they will have to rush off to work right after.

A few *sari-sari* stores have tables in front to serve breakfast. I'm always amazed at how many people buy their breakfast, mostly younger ones, migrants from outside Manila who rent bed space inside the slums, and therefore cannot cook. There are also a few women, and men, who look like they are just about ready to turn in. "We're classmates," one woman once told me, laughing, and I knew she wasn't referring to night school.

One time, at around 6:30 in the morning, I saw an ambulant vendor coming around with caged birds. I asked who would buy birds this early. It turned out he was there to collect from one of the slum dwellers, who had bought some birds on credit a few days earlier. "If you don't come this early, they go off to work and you can't collect," he said.

Other ambulant vendors come later in the day, selling an incredible variety of goods, from fruits to plastic pots and pans, from ice cream to guitars, from plants to *kapok* pillows.

The day wears on with the *sari-sari* stores and the ambulant vendors. Admittedly, it isn't hard manual labor, but it is time intensive. Toward the afternoon, the streets become even more congested as people come out to put up stalls selling "dirty food" like fish balls, barbecue, fruit juices. Their buyers are students coming out of school, and the occasional office worker on the way home.

After dusk, some of these sidewalk vendors, who live in the slums anyway, just stay on, hoping to catch the last few office workers on their way home—or one of the "classmates" going off to work.

Oh, and who can forget? Between 9 and 10 at night, the lonely cry of one last ambulant vendor: "*Balut. . .balut.*" The *sari-sari* stores stay open, too, offering tonic drinks to go with the *balut.*

At least

So much time goes into all these activities, but the earnings are meager. One vendor once complained to me that although she only charges P5 for a cup of rice, there had been people asking if they could buy just half a cup. But, she sighed, at least she earned some money each day. "At least" is a translation here, expressed in different ways in Filipino, mainly "*buti na lang*" (it's good), "*sa awa ng Diyos*" (with God's pity).

One reader, Enteng Vicente, alerted me a few weeks back to an article by Ninotchka Rosca in the INQUIRER where she refers to our frequent use of the term "at least" and how she sees this as a "cop-out" mentality. She talks about Filipino-Americans working 18/7 (18 hours a day, 7 days a week) for a pittance, but who will be contented: at least we have a job. Here at home, Filipinos have to put in so much more, for much less.

Let me add my thoughts here. The "at least" syndrome goes with "*bahala na,*" often erroneously translated as fatalism. *Bahala na* is not at all passive; it's an expression we use after we've done all we can, and that can be a lot. After all's said and done, we then wait for the results, and when they come, we say "at least. . ." sometimes barely able to conceal our disappointment.

The roots of our "at least/*buti na lang*" syndrome go back to a feudal era, when we were taught to be content with whatever crumbs the *datu*, the *hacendero*, and later, the politician, throw to us. We accept the left-overs with gratitude, even seeing it as heaven-sent.

Paradox

Coping is fine, but I worry about how our national life has become one coping after another even as new, more serious problems arise, and in paradoxical ways.

"At least" distorts our sense of proportion. We have Filipinos giving up jobs here to earn $200 to $400 a month in war-torn countries, hardly much more than what they'd get here, but "at least" it's abroad and "at least it's dollars."

Sometimes we get weary from having to do so much to get so little, which is why we become vulnerable to get-rich-quick scams: the latest search for Yamashita's lost gold, the pyramiding scams, the politicians' grand poverty eradication schemes.

And when good fortune comes around, we quickly squander the bounties: "At least we lived the good life, as one-day millionaires."

"At least" can be dangerous in the way we suppress our frustration, too often, too long, until we run amok, berserk. The hostage-taking incident last Wednesday, and the frequent reports in the papers about people running amok, are classic sequelae to this "at least" mentality. Call him crazy, call him a publicity-seeker, Jun Ducat was really a more dramatic version of Juan de la Cruz, quietly bearing the pain until something snaps. In this day and age of extreme this and extreme that, hostage-taking is grand performance, grand *diskarte*, to make a point.

All for what? Ducat will fade from public memory by the weekend, another guy who did too much to get too little. The politicians win again, with their promises to do something. "At least" lulls us to accepting the system.

The corrupt, the venal, the greedy—they know the Filipino. The drug industry knows it can get away with charging us some of the highest prices in the world. There are others—the tobacco industry, the junk food manufacturers, the firms that pollute our rivers and our air—who know they can get away as well because even if we do occasionally complain and cry "Foul!", and pass new laws, we'll eventually quiet down and simmer with our at least's.

The powerful know that for them, it takes so little to get away with so much in this country.

Parties same as diploma mills

A POLITICAL PARTY IS TO THE State what seminaries are to the Catholic Church. Just as the Church relies on seminaries to produce priests to man its pulpits and administer its parishes, the State draws from political parties the leaders and functionaries it needs to people its bureaucracy. That's how it is supposed to be in a democracy. But not in our case.

Our seminaries do train scholars and evangelists who propagate and defend the doctrines of their faith; but our political parties do not train leaders who propagate or uphold the democratic way of life, let alone advocate progressive platforms of government. Quite the contrary, our political parties field candidates with a knack for bastardizing democracy while turning the concept of a party system into a travesty.

If politics were an educational system, our parties would be the equivalent of diploma mills disguised as institutes that go through the motions of enrollment, then accredit undertrained and underachieving wards who cheat their way to graduation. Their candidates would be analogous to the dropouts and scions of wealthy alumni who buy their diploma from the enterprising artists of Quiapo and Raon. That's what candidates do when they buy votes or seduce voters through demagoguery and patronage.

The failure of our politicians to establish parties that engage in honest-to-goodness political education, accredit worthy candidates and produce statesmen, is the greatest shortfall in Philippine democracy. The wonder of it all is that the alleged party leaders, self-proclaimed or anointed by dubious characters like themselves, act out the pretense of being statesmen without the slightest embarrassment.

Unless and until we have parties worth their salt, our junketing politicians cannot stand alongside their foreign counterparts without underscoring the hypocrisy and pretentiousness of our system. Their stranglehold on power politics and the economy and their obsession with dynastic succession conspire to condemn generations of Filipinos and whole communities to squatter status in their own land, while driving others to seek meaningful citizenship in other societies.

Now a question arises: Given the dominance of these bogus parties, how can anyone expect Filipinos to take elections seriously?

—MANUEL E. VALDEHUESA JR.,
convenor, Task Force for Good Governance,
valdeman_esq-@yahoo.com

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER LETTERS

All in the mind

IN HIS MARCH 23 COLUMN, Conrado de Quiros failed to mention that the PERC (Political and Economic Risk Consultancy) survey also indicated that the Philippines has been perceived as corrupt for some time now (maybe, because of a free press and unfettered media bias).

The PERC survey is actually a perception survey, not a "reality survey." The survey finding is understandable, given the proliferation of irresponsible columns of opinion writers like De Quiros who perpetuate and exaggerate the perceived corruption in the Philippines.

—JESSE DE GUIA,
jesses01@gmail.com

Can GMA eradicate hunger?

THE HUNGER SITUATION IN THE country is at its worst. According to the latest Social Weather Stations survey, a record high 19 percent of the population (or 17 million Filipinos) experienced involuntary hunger at least once in the last three months. In response, the President has ordered the eradication of hunger in six months. (INQUIRER, 22/03/07) Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita "warned all concerned officials to shape up or be ready to ship out after six months."

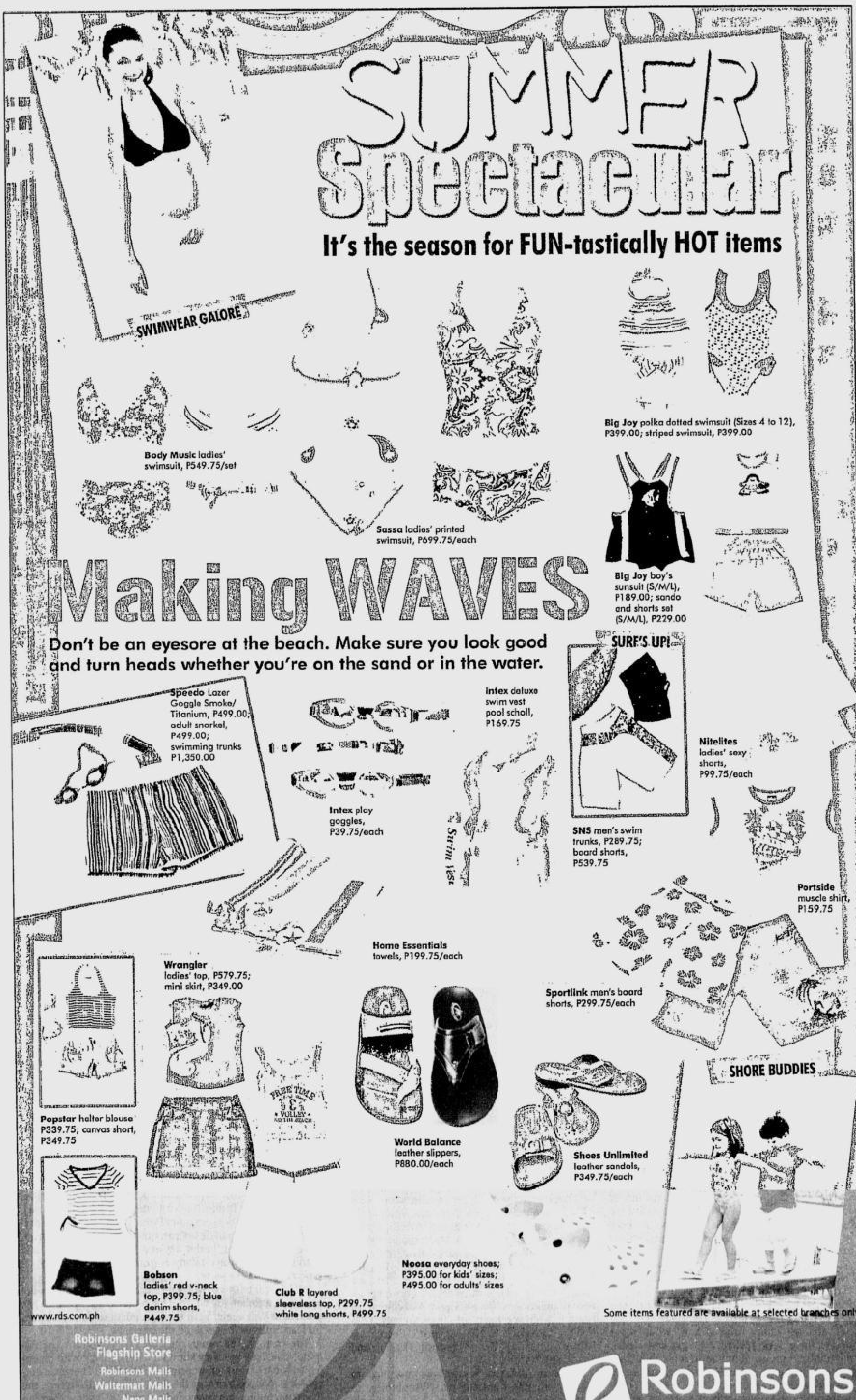
In the past six years that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo has ruled the country, hunger and poverty have worsened (28 million or more Filipinos are poor). It was in 2004 that the hunger incidence hit double-digit figures, right in the middle of the Arroyo regime. If GMA couldn't free the poor from the grip of poverty in six years, how could she do it in six months? To achieve that goal (whether in six months or beyond), she must first shape up.

Does Ermita mean that if hunger is not eradicated by September 2007, GMA will, as the highest official of the land, be ready to ship out? Eradicating hunger is the responsibility of all government officials. As "concerned officials," Ermita's warning should include himself and GMA.

—MARTIN N. TANCHULING,
mntanchuling@yahoo.com

Erratum

In yesterday's editorial, the third sentence of the sixth paragraph should have read "...**underemployment** rose from 18 percent in 2004 to 23 percent in 2006..."—Ed.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A Ducat in most politicians

THERE IS AN ARMANDO DUCAT IN MOST OF our politicians. There was no excuse for him to hold the children hostage. Nobody in his right mind would put kids under so much strain.

I am a father of two kids. And I am very much afraid if politicians will praise Ducat. He betrayed the kids the moment he held them hostage.

INQUIRER.NET VOICES

The situation was like that of the politicians in our country promising us Eden during an election campaign and giving us hell when they are in power. I believe we can find a Ducat in our politicians, because I know one even in our very own city.—**Anthony Gene Villamor, Mandaue City (via e-mail)**

* * *

It is a relief that the hostage-taking crisis ended with no life lost. I think it is just fair to listen to the requests of the hostage-taker because they are for the good of the less fortunate. This is the best time for all those who aspire to win in the coming polls to rethink and maybe include those requests in their platform.

To each and every candidate, this is a challenge. They should focus on the very basic; public service and honest government. It would be nice to see the Philippines rebuild itself so that everyone has a chance at having a better life and the gap between the rich and the poor will not be too big.

It is a shame to be known that the Philippines is the most corrupt country in Asia.—**Marichel Vinco, San Diego, California (via e-mail)**

* * *

The interview answers of Ang Kapatiran senatorial candidate Dr. Martin Bautista in the Inquirer.net podcasts were very encouraging. Listening to them, I feel his love and dedication to our country.

Bautista left a very successful practice in the United States to try to remedy our corrupt politics in the Philippines. I salute his courage and determination, and I hope and pray that the people of the Philippines will see his good intentions and elect him to the Senate.—**Marilou Pablo, San Jose, California (via e-mail)**

* * *

Ang Kapatiran candidates stand out over their rivals in televised discussions and debates. But it remains very quixotic of them to come out only now with a lofty "platform."

The party has been in existence for three years, and I am quite surprised that it hasn't used the time to properly promote itself and its ideals. In this day and age, it is unforgivable to miss out on the variety of creative and media opportunities at hand.

So far, I am impressed with their responses, but good intentions aren't enough. One must win the political race. Intentions must be matched by realistic plans and actions (i.e., how to make possible and realizable a win for Ang Kapatiran). So far, this party falls behind in this expectation.

It would be pitiful if it blamed the Filipino electorate and its being unprepared for platform-based electoral fights if its own candidates cannot reach out to the "*masa*" and touch the middle class with their superlative intentions.—**Jerome Mark Gonzales, Quezon City (via e-mail)**

* * *

If the Philippine economy is going well as the administration says, why is there an exodus of professionals? If this claim of economic improvement is true, then the money is in the hands of the privileged few, and honest hard-working people without privileges can never get out of their predicament.—**Benjamin Jaleco, West Bloomfield, Michigan (via e-mail)**

* * *

Philippine politics is as crazy as the political parties. Look at the Kilusang Bagong Lipunan with its two factions headed by Ferdinand Marcos Jr. and by Oliver Lozano. The administration's Lakas is in conflict with Kampi, and the Liberal Party has two factions, led by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza and by Sen. Franklin Drilon.

Look at the Commission on Elections, which until very recently allowed an obvious nuisance candidate to run for the Senate: the namesake of Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano.

But still, I love the Philippines. It is the only country I have.—**Antonio Costales, San Fernando City, La Union (via e-mail)**

GO explains San Juan no-show

SENATORIAL CANDIDATES OF THE Genuine Opposition ticket maintain close ties with deposed president and opposition figurehead Joseph Estrada.

Former senator Loren Legarda, who is seeking a Senate comeback under the GO slate, said she and other candidates were supposed to meet Estrada on the night of March 27, after the celebration of the centennial foundation of San Juan municipality.

However, the evening meeting was called off since the Sandiganbayan, which is trying Estrada for plunder, ordered the former president to return to his resthouse in Tanay, Rizal, by 5 p.m.

Adel Tamano, GO campaign spokesman, said their candidates' no-show at the San Juan rites where Estrada delivered a speech as an "outstanding citizen" should not be construed as a falling-out.

"We were not sure if the Sandiganbayan was going to grant him a furlough, and the candidates have already made their prior commitments," he said.

Legarda said she called up Estrada twice while she was campaigning in Bukidnon and Cagayan de Oro that day.

"I spoke to him twice. I gave him my support. There's no such thing as a silent purge," she said, disputing the claim made by the administration Team Unity ticket's media manager, Eastern Samar Gov. Benjamin Evardone.

Evardone claimed GO campaign officials have eased out people loyal to Estrada and the late presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. from campaign duties, following the complaints aired by Linggoy Alcuaz.

Alcuaz, who has represented himself as a "volunteer media bureau" staff, publicly complained that he was eased out of the campaign team by Tamano.

San Juan mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, deputy campaign manager of GO, belittled Alcuaz's complaint.

"It's a small thing," said Ejercito, adding the matter will not affect their operation.

Ejercito stepped down to let Sen. Sergio Osmeña III assume as overall campaign manager.

Loren Legarda: It's No. 1 or bust

By Dona Pazzibugan

OPPOSITION SENATORIAL CANDIDATE Loren Legarda said she will not settle for anything less than the number one spot in the May 14 mid-term senatorial elections.

Legarda, a former senator and vice presidential candidate who is now running under the Genuine Opposition slate, said surveys have shown her to have such a "commanding" lead over other candidates that election results that show otherwise would likely be doubted.

She was the running mate of the late action star Fernando Poe Jr. in the 2004 presidential elections but lost to Vice President Noli de Castro. She spent the last three years contesting the election results.

For her Senate comeback, Legarda has pegged her campaign on the slogan, "Loren Legarda, Number One sa Senado."

In an interview yesterday, Legarda said her slogan was not based on wishful thinking but on popularity surveys over the last two years that showed she would top the list of likely Senate winners.

She topped the Social Weather Station (SWS) survey of senatorial contenders held early this month.

"It's not that I want to be number one. I've been number one in the past two years in the surveys," Legarda insisted yesterday.

"Of course it would be sweet victory if I retain my number one (ranking). I don't think anybody would be a hypocrite and (say they) do not want that. But it's not just wanting it. It's already having it and keeping it and protecting it," she added.

Despite her lead in the surveys and with six weeks left before the elections, Legarda is relentless in her campaigning, relying mainly on her own campaign machinery.

"The fear of being cheated still remains," she said.

"I just want to finish this fight fair and square and hopefully sustain my being number one, not for the sake of just being number one. But it means *hindi nagkadayaan. Dahil pag bumagsak ako, maniniwala ba ang tao?* (If I drop in the rankings, will the people believe that?)," she said.

Legarda said the black propaganda hurled against her was meant to dislodge her from the top rank.

"I know who's doing it. I know the group that's doing it. I ignore it. (But) they can not dislodge me whatever they do. I have the people with me," she said.

Opposition re-electionist Sen. Panfilo Lacson, who ran for president in 2004, is also in the top six in the surveys but so far he has not entered the top three spots.

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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

IN THE MATTER OF THE FILING OF CERTIFICATE OF CANDIDACY FOR MEMBER OF THE HOUSEOF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE TWO(2) LEGISLATIVE DISTRICTS OF CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY FOR MAY 14, 2007 NATIONAL AND LOCAL ELECTIONS.

PRESENT

ABALOS, Benjamin S.	Chairman
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.	Commissioner
TUASON, Florentino Jr., A.	Commissioner
BRAWNER, Romeo A.	Commissioner
SARMIENTO, Rene V.	Commissioner
FERRER, Nicodemo T.	Commissioner

x---x **Promulgated: 29 March 2007**

RESOLUTION NO. 7846

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9371, approved on February 22, 2007, apportioned Cagayan de Oro City, a Highly Urbanized City, into two (2) legislative districts to commence in the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections, as follows:

> ***"SEC. 1. Legislative Districts*** – The lone district of the City of Cagayan de Oro is hereby apportioned to commence in the next national elections after the effectivity of this Act. Henceforth, barangays Bonbon, Bayabay, Kauswagan, Carmen, Patag, Bulua, Iponan, Baikingon, San Simon, Pagatpat, Canitoan, Balulang, Lumbia, Pagalungan, Tagpangi, Taglimao, Tuburan, Pigsag-an, Tumpagon, Bayanga, Mambuaya, Dansulihon, Tignapoloan and Bisigan shall comprise the first district while barangays Macabalan, Puntod, Consolacion, Camaman-an, Nazareth, Macansandig, Indahag, Lapasan, Gusa, Cugman, FS Catanico, Tablon, Agusan, Puerto Bugo and Balubal and all urban barangays from Barangay 1 to Barangay 40 shall comprise the seconed district."

WHEREAS, many political groups and personalities of Cagayan de Oro City have requested the Commission to promulgate the Implementing Rules and Regulations to clarify whether or not in the filing of certificates of candidacy for Member of the House of Representatives in the May 14, 2007 Elections, it is not required that the candidate must be a registered voter and a resident of the particular legislative district in which he is running for as discussed and advocated during the Second Reading of HB No. 5859 in the Philippine Senate;

WHEREAS, there is no express requirement in RA No. 9371, that in the elections of May 14, 2007, the candidate running for Member of the House of Representatives in a certain legislative district in Cagayan de Oro City should be a registered voter of particular legislative district and a resident thereof for at least one year immediately preceding the day of the election;

WHEREAS, Article.VI, Sec. 6 of the Constitution expressly provides that *"no person shall be a Member of the House of Representatives unless he is a natural-born citizen of the Philippines and, on the day of the election, is at least twenty-five years of age, able to read and write, and, except the party-list representatives, a registered voter in the district in which he shall be elected, and a resident thereof for a period of not less than one year immediately preceding the day of the election."*

NOW, THEREFORE, the Commission RESOLVED, as it hereby RESOLVES, that for the May 14, 2007 National and Local Elections, and succeeding national elections, a candidate for Member of the House of Representatives for any of the two legislative districts of Cagayan de Oro City must be a registered voter of the district in which he shall be elected, and a resident thereof for a period of not less than one year immediately preceding the day of the election.

Let the Education and Information Department this Commission, cause the publication of this Resolution in two (2) daily newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines, and immediately furnish copies thereof to all Election Officer of Cagayan de Oro City and the Regional Election Director of Region X.

SO ORDERED.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS
Chairman

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
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Pacquiao now official GMA candidate

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—BOXER MANNY PACQUIAO officially filed his certificate of candidacy in absentia 1:40 p.m. yesterday at the Commission on Elections (Comelec) provincial office in Koronadal City, South Cotabato.

Pacquiao's legal and financial adviser, Franklin Gacal Jr., signed the documents through the special power of attorney the famous boxer had executed before flying to the United States to train for his next fight.

Gacal told reporters that shortly before he entered the Comelec office, Pacquiao called him up and asked whether his COC had already been filed.

PROOF that Pacquiao is now officially a candidate for congressman were the candidacy papers the Comelec office in South Cotabato processed for the boxer. AQUILES ZONIO/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Gacal was accompanied by Pacquiao's youngest brother Ruel, General Santos City mayoral aspirant Rosalita Nuñez and several supporters.

Gacal led a convoy of about 20 vehicles from General Santos City, where Nuñez and members of her slate earlier filed their COCs, to Koronadal City, 56 kilometers west of Gensan.

Pacquiao's legal adviser claimed he was not expecting that many supporters would join the convoy, adding that "I was just amazed by the spontaneous support shown by the people."

After Gacal finished filing Pacman's certificate of candidacy, he called the Filipino ring idol to inform him about it.

Gacal turned on his mobile phone's speaker to let the reporters hear what Pacquiao would say.

In their conversation, Pacquiao told Gacal to just let the people know what he was doing was the biggest sacrifice of his life.

"*Ginagawa ko ito hindi para sa sarili ko kundi para sa kanila. Hindi sila magsisisi, gagawin ko ang lahat na makakaya ko para matulungan ang mga kababayan ko sa* first district (South Cotabato) (I'm doing this not for myself but for them. They won't regret this because I will do everything to help my town mates in the first district)," Pacquiao said.

Provincial Comelec officer Lilian Radam told reporters that Pacquiao was the second congressional candidate for the South Cotabato 1st congressional district to file his certificate of candidacy.

On Wednesday, the group of incumbent Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio motored from here to Koronadal City to file her COC.

Custodio was accompanied by General Santos Mayor Pedro Acharon Jr. and several political followers.

She was met by South Cotabato Gov. Daisy Fuentes and her group, who, along with Custodio, also filed their COCs.

After poring over Pacman's certificate of candidacy, Radam said: "Everything was in order. Pacquiao now has officially filed his candidacy. We expect him to follow all the election rules and regulations."

On Wednesday, Pacquiao's camp pulled out all his posters and streamers featuring his commercial endorsements.

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CANNES LIONS 2007 54th INTERNATIONAL ADVERTISING FESTIVAL 17-23 JUNE UPDATE

CANNES LIONS 2007 DIRECT AND RADIO JURIES ANNOUNCED

London, 27 March 2007 – Members of the 54th Cannes Lions International Advertising Festival Direct and Radio juries were announced today.

The Direct Lions jury, chaired by Rory Sutherland, Vice-Chairman, Ogilvy Group UK, will meet in Cannes and commence voting on 13 June. The winners will be announced on 18 June. Headed by David Guerrero, Chairman & Chief Creative Officer, BBDO Guerrero Ortega, the Radio Lions jury will begin judging in Cannes on 15 June with the winners being honoured on 19 June.

"We are delighted to bring together such a group of top professionals whose expertise is fundamental to the judging process. They will be looking to award fresh and innovative work in these two challenging categories, where creativity is increasingly more important," said Terry Savage, Executive Chairman of the Festival.

DIRECT JURY MEMBERS

UK, Rory Sutherland, Vice Chairman, Ogilvy Group UK (Jury President)

Argentina, Enrique Meyer, President & Chief Creative Officer, Meyer Action Marketing
Australia, Paula Keamy, Creative Director, Rapp Collins Melbourne
Austria, Sandra Moser, Creative Director, Dr. Kossdorff
Belgium, Geert Troch, Creative Director, Managing Partner, DVN
Brazil, Flavio Salles, President, Sun / MRM Worldwide
Canada, Thomas Nelligan, Creative Group Head, Blitz Direct, Data & Promotion
Chile, Santiago Puiggari, General Manager & CEO, Grey Chile
Denmark, Per Djervig-Chamby, Creative Director, Sepia Proximity
France, Eva Klaass, Creative Director, Vice President, Draftfcb
Germany, Olaf Oldigs, Executive Creative Director, Kolle Rebbe
Germany, Folker Wrage, Creative Head, Saatchi & Saatchi X
India, Ashish Bhasin, Director - Integrated Marketing Action Group, Lintas India
Italy, Silvia Bignardi, CRM Unit Director, Publicis Dialog
Malaysia, Theresa Tsang, Creative Director, Arc Worldwide
New Zealand, Andy Blood, Executive Creative Director, TBWA\Whybin
Norway, Håvard Buran Naerdal, Art Director, Rapp Collins
Peru, Fernando Saettone, President & Executive Creative Director, Casa Tomada
Poland, Adam Cieplowski, Creative Director, BTL, Leo Burnett Warsaw
Portugal, Mário Silva, Chief Executive Officer, HPP Euro RSCG
Singapore, Robert Gaxiola, Executive Creative Director, Bates Asia
South Africa, Stuart Stobbs, Creative Director, Proximity#ttp
Spain, Marina Specht, Chief Executive Officer, MRM Worldwide
Sweden, Ulrika Good, Copywriter, GOSS
Switzerland, Andreas Widmer, Chief Executive Officer, Futurecom Interactive/Wunderman
The Netherlands, Peep van der Molen, Creative Director, Woedendl
United Arab Emirates, Kerry Platts, Executive Creative Director, Wunderman Dubai
United Kingdom, Steve Stretton, Creative Partner, Archibald Ingall Stretton
United Kingdom, Dave Woods, Joint Executive Creative Director, Claydon Heeley
USA, Heather Higgins, Executive Vice President & Executive Creative Director, Draftfcb
USA, Rachael Heapps, Chief Creative Officer North America, Rapp Collins Worldwide

RADIO JURY MEMBERS

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Argentina, Fernando Cornicelli, President & General Creative Director, Cornicelli Publicidad
Australia, Ralph van Dijk, Creative Director, Eardrum
Belgium, Paul Wauters, Group Creative Director, LG&F
Brazil, João Livi, Creative Director, Talent
Canada, Duncan Bruce, Senior Vice President & Executive Creative Director, Publicis Toronto
France, Veronique Sels, Copywriter, TBWA Paris
Germany, Matthias Luehrsen, Managing Partner, Hastings Music
Italy, Michela Grasso, Copywriter Supervisor, SaffirioTortelliVigoriti
Norway, Carina Laurhammer, Senior Copywriter, McCann
Portugal, Jorge Teixeira, Chief Creative Officer, DDB Lisbon
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The Netherlands, Ferry van Tongeren, Creative Director, Doom&Dickson
United Kingdom, Martin Galton, Creative Director, Hooper Galton
USA, Becky Swanson, Executive Creative Director, Leo Burnett

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Priest pushes 'kariton' in filing bid

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—UNLIKE CANDIDATES who arrived in expensive cars, Catholic priest Eddie Panlilio pushed a "*kariton*" (wooden cart) carrying five children and the image of the Virgin Mary on his way to the Commission on Elections office here where he filed on Thursday his certificate of candidacy for governor.

"*Kapampangan ku* (I am a Kapampangan)," his campaign's signature jingle, blared at the background as Panlilio, the first priest in Pampanga to run for public office, walked his way to the Comelec from the Metropolitan Cathedral, some 500 meters away.

"*Daing da ring pakakalulu atad tamu capitolyo* (Let's bring the pleas of the poor to the provincial capitol)" was the slogan scribbled on manila paper held by two poor boys who were among his wards in Guagua town, where he used to be the parish priest until Wednesday when he celebrated his last Mass.

Around 500 supporters, some carrying handmade placards, accompanied him to the Comelec. They also launched on Thursday a "*bulug-bulug*" or a fund-raising drive for him.

In the COC, the 53-year-old candidate wrote "priesthood" on the space allotted for profession. He is running as an independent candidate.

Panlilio said Archbishop Paciano Aniceto has not yet acted on his request for a leave of absence. He has been a priest for 26 years, mainly spent on parish and social action work.

He said he believed he enjoyed the "respect and understanding" of the clerics, having only answered the clamor of the laity for an "alternative moral choice" to reelectionist Gov. Mark Lapid and Board Member Lilia Pineda.

Running on a crusade for moral leadership and good governance, Panlilio intends to stop graft and corruption in the provincial government to be able to use public funds for services needed by the poor and to stop jueteng by financing micro-enterprises.

Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo is running against Jose Montemayor Jr. of the Liberal Party. Montemayor, 45, hails from Sasmuan, a town next to Lubao where Arroyo has established residence since 2001 when he was vice governor.

Bulacan

In Bulacan, outgoing Hagonoy Mayor Felix Ople distributed shoes to graduating public elementary students in various schools after he filed his candidacy for a congressional seat in the first district.

He said the project was initiated by his sister, Susan Ople, who heads the Blas Ople Foundation.

He said his family wanted to distribute shoes to poor students because his father, late Sen. Blas Ople, went to school either with a pair of old slippers or barefoot since his parents could not afford to buy him shoes.

Ople, who is running against Hagonoy Vice Mayor Marivic Alvarado, vowed to continue the legacy of his father, a former labor and foreign secretary and president of the International Labor Organization.

Ilocos Norte

In Laoag City, Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has fielded his cousin and former Gintong Alay chair, Michael Keon, for the gubernatorial post after months of consultations within the Marcos camp.

Marcos, who is running as congressman for the second district, firmed up his lineup Thursday, which includes long-time Marcos associate and reelectionist Rep. Roque Ablan Jr., for the first district.

Marcos, Keon and Ablan and members of their local ticket walked from the provincial capitol to the Comelec office in Laoag.

"We have tried to fix the gubernatorial post. It is important for us that one in the family still runs (for governor)," Marcos said.

While Marcos and other candidates were about to leave the capitol for the Comelec office, former Gov. Rodolfo Fariñas arrived, accompanied by his daughter Camille.

Fariñas went out of his van and walked straight to Marcos and shook hands. It was the first occasion for the former allies to meet publicly at the provincial capitol in years after they broke their political alliance.

Fariñas, regional chair of the Nationalist People's Coalition, said he had yet to decide whether to run for governor or field his elder brother, former Laoag Mayor Roger Fariñas.

Baguio

In Baguio City, a nine-cornered fight loomed for the mayoral post.

Former Mayor Bernardo Vergara, who served for three terms as Baguio representative, is again running against suspended Mayor Braulio Yaranon.

Other candidates are acting Mayor Reinaldo Bautista Jr., acting Vice Mayor Leandro Yangot, former Councilor Virgilio Bautista, Felipe Ramos and Guillermo Hernandez.

Controversial faith healer Ramon "Jun" Labo, who was city mayor in 1988 and 1989 until he was unseated over questions about his citizenship, also filed his COC for mayor on Wednesday alongside Muslim supporters and television bit players. Labo is a Kilusang Bagong Lipunan candidate.

Reelectionist Rep. Mauricio Domogan, a Lakas-CMD official, is being challenged by human rights lawyer Jose Molintas, Thomas Tayengco, and Ramon Kindipan.

La Union

In La Union, amid blue balloons and 11 doves representing the second district towns to signify peace and unity, Abraham "Abe" Purugganan, former rebel soldier and presidential adviser for special concerns, filed his COC for the district representative. He is pitted against incumbent Rep. Thomas Dumpit Jr. and Agoo Mayor Eufranio Eriguel.

Twice leading the Reformed Armed Forces Movement and the Young Officers Union, Purugganan claimed he has an edge over the two other contenders due to his experience as an advocate for reforms and being a peace negotiator.

Isabela

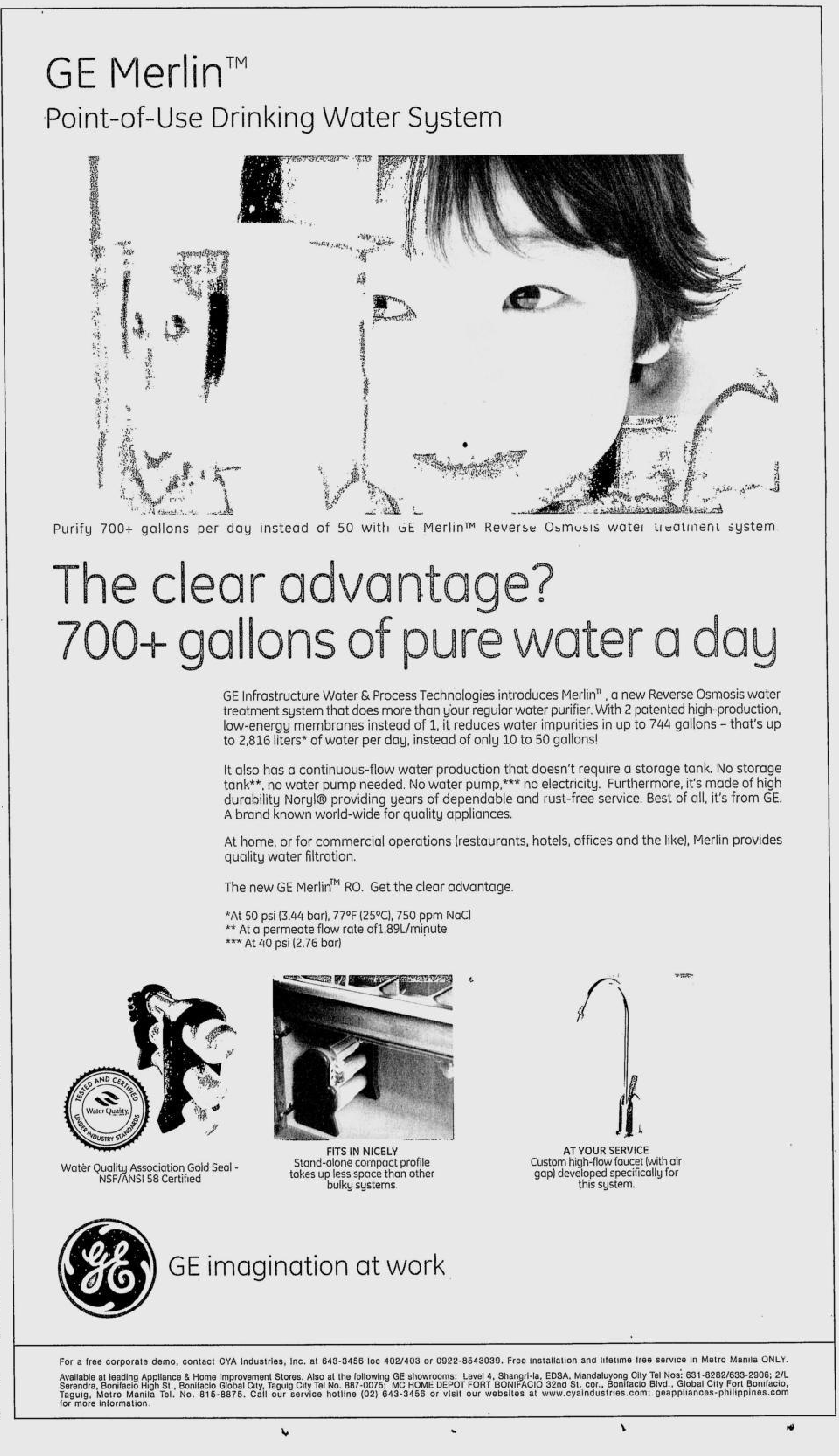
In Isabela, the grand coalition of six political parties has fielded Representatives Faustino Dy III (third district), Rodolfo Albano III (first district) and Anthony Miranda (fourth district).

Three-term Roxas town mayor, Benedict Calderon, is running for representative in the second district.

Former Gov. Faustino Dy Jr., who is seeking a rematch with reelectionist Gov. Maria Gracia Cielo Padaca, has also earned the nomination of the administration's coalition. *Tonette Orejas, Jun Malig and Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon; Cristina Arzadon, Vincent Cabreza, Hanna Lacsamana and Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon*

> A priest running for political office was 'something very, very new' to the local Roman Catholic Church

CATHOLIC priest Eddie Panlilio pushes a wooden cart on his way to the election office in San Fernando, Pampanga to symbolize the pro-poor crusade he is leading as a gubernatorial candidate in Pampanga.



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Guimaras town appeals junked case vs Petron

By Nestor Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—THE MUNICIPALity of Nueva Valencia in Guimaras on Tuesday appealed the dismissal of a complaint against officials of Petron Corp. and owners of the MT Solar I in connection with last year's massive oil spill in Guimaras.

In a motion for reconsideration, Guimaras provincial legal officer Plaridel Nava II asked the provincial prosecutor's office to reverse its March 2 resolution dismissing the complaint filed by Nueva Valencia Mayor Diosdado Gonzaga.

Gonzaga had filed the complaint against Petron president Khalid Al-Faddagh and chair and chief executive officer Nicasio Alcantara, vice president for operations Felimon Antiporta, health safety and environment officer Carlos Tan and Clemente Cancio, president of Sunshine Maritime Development Corp., owners of Solar I.

Lack of evidence

In his motion, Nava said the resolution issued by provincial prosecutor Luzermindo Calmorin "is not in accord with law and evidence on hand."

He said the prosecutor also "erred in giving much premium on legal technicalities rather than the spirit and intent of the law."

Calmorin dismissed the complaint against the respondents for violating Republic Act No. 9275 (Clean Water Act of 2004), RA 8749 (Clean Air Act of 1999) and RA 9003 (Ecological Solid Waste Management Act of 2000) for lack of evidence.

In dismissing the complaint, the prosecutor had said in his resolution that the sinking of the tanker and the oil spill were unintentional acts.

He also said there was no evidence to show that the respondents were responsible for illegally dumping and discharging waste material.

But Nava said that whether the sinking and oil spill was deliberate or not had "never been the subject of the complaint."

Nava reiterated that Petron should be held criminally liable for the spraying of dispersants by Petron-hired personnel on the shores of Barangay Guiwanon in September last year without authorization.

He said the prosecutor "erred" in the interpretation and application of Section 4 of Presidential Decree No. 979 (Marine Pollution Law).

Interpretation

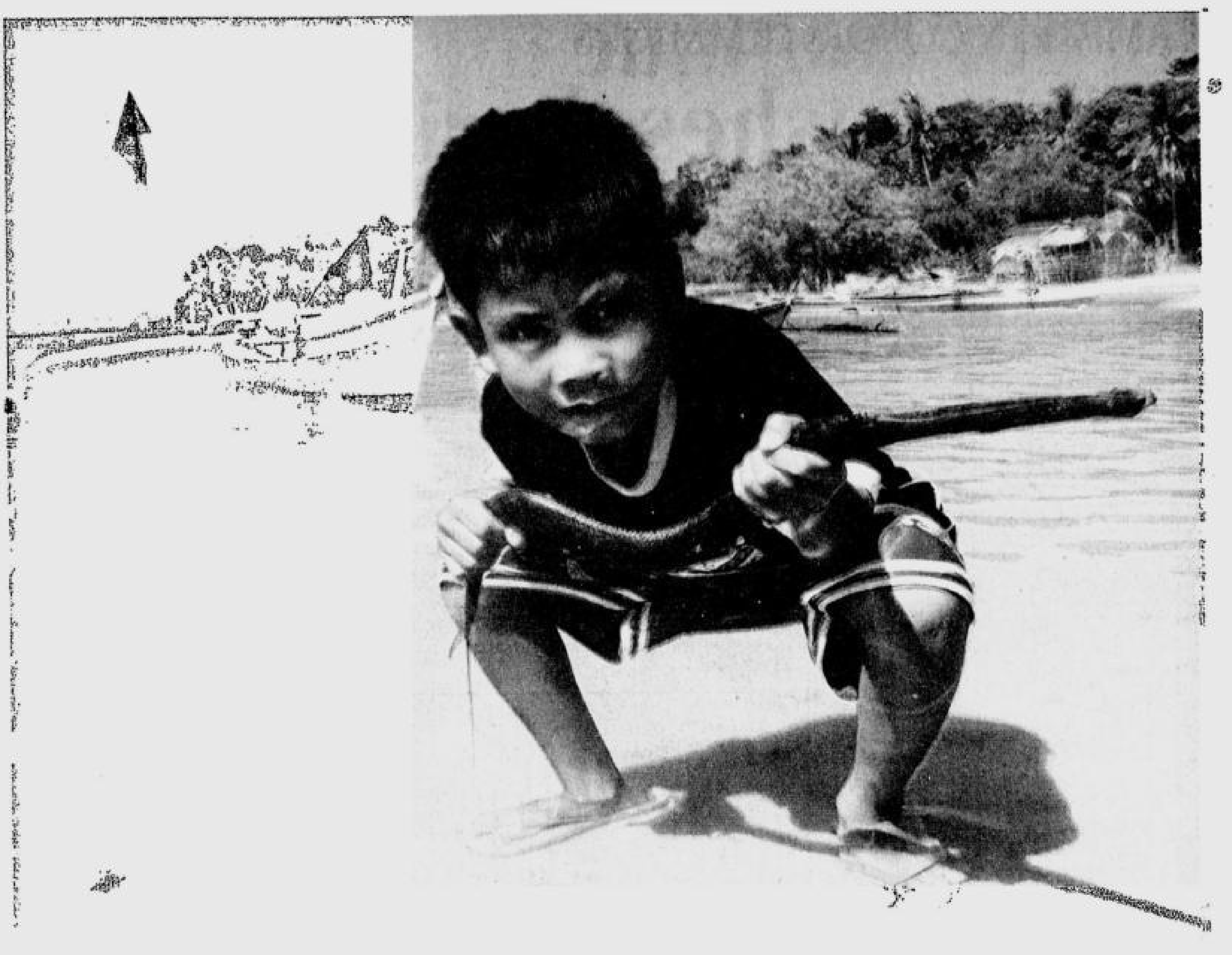
"While the law is intended and directed against intentional and deliberate acts, the complaint does not pertain to the sinking of MT Solar I or the spillage of oil but is founded upon the unlawful discharge of liquid substance into the water bodies or along the margins of any surface water," said Nava in his motion.

He also said "the sinking of MT Solar I could have been avoided had Petron Corp. been more prudent in selecting the vessel that would carry its bunker fuel oil."

An environmental group raised apprehensions that the decision of the prosecutor could be made a precedent in future cases involving oil spills.

"Being so lenient in environmental protection is giving a wrong signal to the people," said Reylan Vergara, regional campaign coordinator of Madia-as Ecological Movement.

"It is lamentable to note that Petron will be easily absolved of its gross negligence by hiring a weak and decrepit oil tanker in transporting its bunker fuel on Philippine waters."



CHILDREN play on the shores of the village of Tando in Nueva Valencia town, Guimaras as they wait for their parents to return home from the sea from a day of fishing. Fish catch has declined although Petron officials declared the job to clean up the province's waters of oil that destroyed mangroves and other marine life was already done.
ARNOLD ALMACEN/INQUIRER VISAYAS

JDV to sing, dance, kiss babies this time around

By Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes
Inquirer Northern Luzon

DAGUPAN CITY—AFTER RUNNING UNOPposed in past elections, Speaker Jose de Venecia is now ready to "sing and dance and kiss babies, even older babies," to win in Pangasinan's fourth congressional district.

De Venecia filed his certificate of candidacy on Thursday at the Commission on Elections office here, accompanied by his wife Gina and mayoral candidates in the district's towns and this city.

He is being challenged by Mayor Benjamin Lim, who he described as "a capable leader and a good candidate."

Lim filed his candidacy on Monday.

"I need the exercise," De Venecia, who was in jovial mood, told reporters after filing his COC.

But he admitted that he needed to practice dancing. "We will be dancing again. It's fun," he said.

He said he would not be resting a bit during the campaign period as he planned to go "to all corners of the district to talk with the fishermen, the farmers, the jeepney drivers."

ELEKSYON 2007

He said he enjoyed eating oysters and *ampalaya* (bitter melon) and snails with villagers.

Asked if he would support Lim if the mayor decided to slide to his old post, he said it was too late.

"There are people who cry wolf hundreds of time. If they cry wolf (again), nobody will believe them anymore. They had all the time to have reasonable, dignified, honorable decisions," he said.

Former Mayor Alipio Fernandez Jr. has resigned as immigration commissioner to start his bid to regain his old post at City Hall. His running mate is businesswoman Belen Fernandez, who reportedly will run against Lim's son Bryan.

Former Gov. Oscar Orbos said he was not pursuing his bid to reclaim his seat as governor. "I regret I cannot, given the constraints and difficulties, rise up to the challenge to again seek the governorship," Orbos said in a text message to the INQUIRER.

There are six candidates for governor: Dr. Jamie Eloise Agbayani, wife of outgoing Gov. Victor Agbayani, who is running as an independent; Rep. Amado Espino Jr., of the Nationalist People's Coalition and Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi); Vice Gov. Oscar Lambino of Lakas-CMD; Bartolome Padilla of Rosales town; Modesto Capulong of Mangaldan town, and Reynaldo Sebastian of Asingan town.

In Alaminos City, Mayor Hernani Braganza said he was running for reelection, almost two months after he announced he was retiring from politics. He said no one among his party mates wanted to take his position.

On Feb. 6, he announced that he was disgusted with the "politics of compromise" in the country where, he said, politicians resort to junking their party mates just to win. *With a report from Gabriel Cardinoza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

GMA party execs say incumbent Batangas gov endorsed by Kampi

CALAMBA CITY—Officials of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) denied that the party had dropped their support for incumbent Batangas Gov. Armando Sanchez in favor of Lipa Mayor Vilma Santos.

Ding Tanjuatco, Kampi secretary general, said Sanchez would remain as official candidate "until we receive instructions that it's otherwise."

He said Kampi had already signed the certificate of nomination of Sanchez when the latter joined the party and took his oath two weeks ago.

He said the governor was also recognized as the provincial chair of the political party of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

"Kampi will support all its official candidates including Governor Sanchez. We will do so until we receive instructions that it's otherwise. Right now, there's none," he told the INQUIRER in a phone interview.

Asked about his reaction over the supposed pledge of support of Camarines Sur. Rep. Luis Villafuerte, Kampi president, for the candidacy of Santos, he replied: "I think that's his personal opinion. You know in Kampi, everybody is allowed to speak his mind."

During a sortie of Team Unity in Camarines Sur last week, Villafuerte reportedly announced that he would support Santos' gubernatorial bid in his capacity as president of the party.

"But we have a set of provisions. (If we will have a change in nominations), it should go through the electoral committee of Kampi," Tanjuatco said.

ARMAN SANCHEZ WALANG KATAPAT!
GOVERN
ARMA
SAN

BATANGAS Gov. Armand Sanchez thanks his followers during a recent show of support for his reelection bid.
INQUIRER PHOTO

The INQUIRER tried to get the reaction of Villafuerte but he did not reply to text messages and calls made on his mobile phone.

Francis Ver, Kampi deputy secretary general, declined to comment on the statement made by Villafuerte.

He, however, reiterated that Sanchez was the one who took his oath as the official candidate of Kampi in Batangas.

"I ask you, 'Who among them was sworn in as Kampi candidate?' It's Governor Sanchez, isn't it? Santos is from Lakas. If she swears in as member of Kampi, that would change the whole thing."

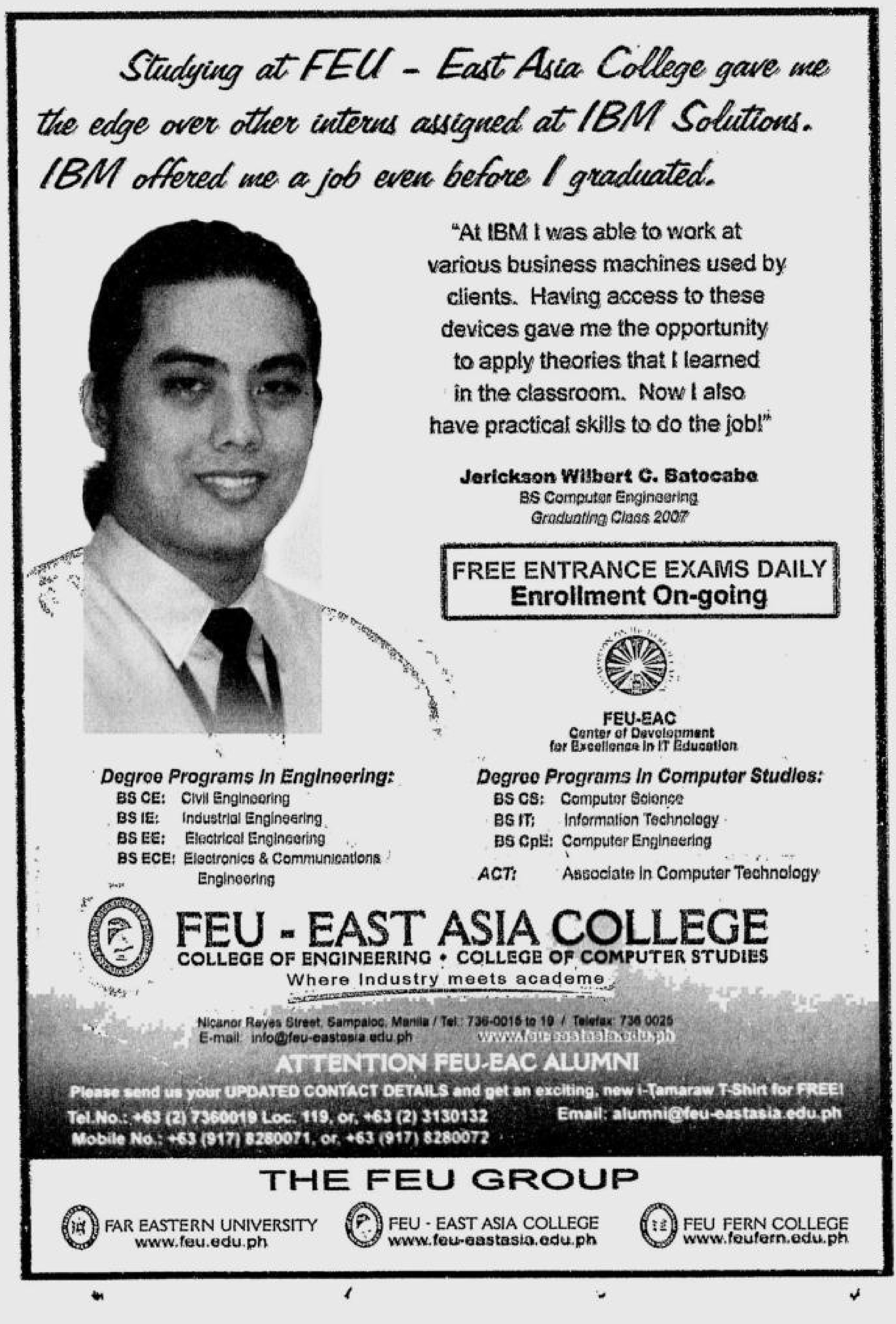
Sanchez, on the other hand, said he is confident that Kampi would support his reelection all the way. He said he does not doubt the loyalty of the leadership of the President's party.

Lawyer Ronaldo Geron, provincial administrator, reiterated that he had a duly-accomplished certificate of nomination from Kampi.

His group "will remain true and loyal to the party. Intrigues don't bother the governor. We are confident that the party would still support us," Geron said in an interview.

Geron likewise hit reelectionist Sen. Ralph Recto for sowing speculations "stoked by greed that had even sacrificed their brother."

"We will see more manipulations in the coming days. But we believe that Batangueños are discerning enough to see through these lies. They would want to be led by real and genuine Batangueños," he said.
Marlon Ramos, Inquirer Southern Luzon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Josons continue to dominate N. Ecija politics

A MEMBER OF THE JOSON FAmily in Nueva Ecija who walks around without a bodyguard because, he said, "if you're loved by the people, then why be afraid of the people," filed his certificate of candidacy (COC) for governor on Wednesday.

Mariano Cristino "Boyet" Joson, who has been going around Nueva Ecija's remotest areas with his mobile clinics for the last three years, seeks to replace an elder brother, Tomas III, as governor.

Tomas III is running for mayor of the province's most urbanized city, Cabanatuan.

Boyet led a motorcade from a cathedral to the provincial capitol to file his COC.

He was known to move around with only a driver by his side. Asked once why, unlike other politicians who are surrounded by bodyguards, he moves around unguarded, he said: "If the people really love you, then why protect yourself against the people?"

Tomas III proceeded to the Cabanatuan City Hall to file his COC there.

Running for vice governor of the province is another Joson, Edward Thomas, the eldest son of the incumbent governor and currently provincial board member.

The fielding of mostly Josons in the race for key positions in the province indicated that the family has kept its dominance of Nueva Ecija politics.

They filed their certificates of candidacy under the Bagong Lakas ng Nueva Ecija (Balane), a party that has been dominating Nueva Ecija politics since it was founded by the late Eduardo Joson, formerly the province's governor, in 1986.

Boyet has shunned media interviews but he said his focus would be on giving better health services to residents. At the centerpiece of this drive is a plan to build a hospital that would offer free services to poor patients, he said.

In previous interviews, he had said he dreamt of a province where sick residents need not go to Metro Manila to seek treatment for serious illnesses.

It was this dream that propelled him to bring mobile clinics around the province's most remote areas to bring health services right at the doorsteps of the poor, he said.

The candidate for governor also vowed to pursue his brother's program of wooing back into the fold of the law communist guerrillas or their sympathizers by providing them livelihood opportunities.

Tomas said that as mayor of Cabanatuan, he would start programs to solve the city's growing problem on homelessness and bring the poor education through night classes for those who could not afford school. *Anselmo Roque, Inquirer Central Luzon*

Father-son conflict brings bizarre twist to Camarines Sur polls

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Inquirer Southern Luzon

NAGA CITY—A FATHER-SON feud in the most dominant political clan in Camarines Sur, the Villafuertes, ushered in a bizarre electoral scenario in the province on Wednesday.

Incumbent Rep. Luis Villafuerte (second district), national chair of the Kabalikat ng Mamamayang Pilipino (Kampi), endorsed former Rep. Eduardo Pilapil as the party's gubernatorial candidate against incumbent Gov. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr., the regional chair of Lakas-CMD.

LRay, the youngest son of Villafuerte, won in 2004 through the tutelage and political machinery of his father.

The decision to endorse Pilapil, a tourism secretary during the Ramos administration, was a clamor of the incumbent mayors of Camarines Sur, said the elder Villafuerte. He said that the mayors were against the governor's decision to field candidates for mayor, vice mayor and councilors.

Endorsement

LRay, who filed his certificate of candidacy on Wednesday, said the endorsement of Pilapil violated an agreement of the national administration coalition, which includes Lakas-CMD and Kampi. But he said he was still supporting the reelection bid of his father.

Former Rep. Sulpicio Roco Jr., younger brother of the late Sen. Raul Roco, who lost in 2004, is running again against the elder Villafuerte.

In a letter dated March 8, Rep. Marcelino Libanan, Lakas-CMD secretary general, informed LRay of the decision of the National Arbitration Committee to prohibit him from signing certificates of nomination and acceptance for Lakas-CMD candidates for city and municipal mayors, vice mayors and councilors in the province.

Congressman Villafuerte also told acting provincial election officer Noriel Badiola of the decision.

"Any unauthorized nomination is not only illegal but constitutes material misinterpretation which is a ground for penalties or sanctions, including disqualification," he warned Badiola in a letter dated March 26.

But LRay said he was authorized to nominate in a document signed by Speaker Jose de Venecia and other personalities of the administration's coalition. The other parties of the coalition are the Liberal Party (Atienza faction), Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and Partido Demokratiko Sosyalista Pilipino.

Conflicting stands

The father-son feud in the Villafuerte family stemmed from conflicting stands on issues that culminated in the split of Kampi and Lakas-CMD in the province.

In 2004, LRay won over former Rep. Wimpy Fuentebella (Nationalist People's Coalition), who initiated the impeachment move against then Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. in 2003, and former Mayor Emmanuel Alfelor (LP) of Iriga City.

The race was a classic confrontation among five major political clans—the Villafuertes, Rocos, Fuentebellas, Alfelors and the Andayas. The Villafuerte family emerged as victors, transforming the political landscape into a pro-Arroyo alliance with three major actors—Budget Secretary Rolando Andaya Jr., Rep. Felix Alfelor Jr. and the elder Villafuerte.

RUSH JOB

BING GONZALES/INQUIRER MINDANAO

Workers in Davao City rush the printing and drying of campaign T-shirts as the period for the campaign of candidates for local positions starts. The campaign has brought good business to T-shirt printers and other makers of campaign materials.

Etiquette lessons for politicians, gov't execs

RIZAL, KALINGA—WHO SITS ON the right and who sits on the left when a very important person (VIP) pays a visit?

This is one of the questions on protocol that the Department of Tourism in Cordillera wants to address in a seminar-workshop it will hold for government officials and employees in the region.

Purificacion Molintas, DOT-Cordillera director, said they will train government personnel on social graces and etiquette to help them learn the dynamics of conduct when a VIP visits their area.

Molintas, who was guest here during the town's celebration of the First Pinikpikan Festival on Saturday, said 200 local government officials—from congressmen to municipal councilors—will go through the training after the May 14 elections.

The training, a project of the Cordillera Regional Development Council, will be conducted by officials of the Department of Foreign Affairs.

After the politicians, regional directors and technical staffers of government line agencies will follow suit.

Training

Local officials will also be taught how to standardize the welcome streamers and appropriate tokens for important guests.

"This is the first time that we will conduct this kind of training. We see the need to express ourselves on proper protocol. Many officials are not confident on how to conduct themselves. They do not know who should sit on the right and who should sit on the left of the table when there are important events," Molintas told reporters here.

She said they will teach officials how to express themselves properly when acknowledging the presence of their guests.

"Cordillerans are not expressive on extending their gratitude. For them, they just nod to express their gratitude. But in other cultures, such gesture is not accepted as an expression of gratitude," she said.

She added: "We have to let local officials know that if you are teaming up with other cultures, there should be a standard." *Desiree Caluza, Inquirer Northern Luzon*

Mayor warns of plot to hound her with cases

THE MAYOR OF THE VIOLENCE-prone town of Sapang Dalaga, Misamis Occidental, has warned all prosecutors all over the country against a ploy of political rivals to file trumped-up charges against her and her family to knock them out of the running in the coming elections.

In a press statement, Mayor Virginia Animas raised the alarm on the eve of the campaign period for the local elections. Her family's political opponents may try, yet again, to use the same modus operandi to eliminate political rivals, she said.

Animas did not say who were behind the trumped-up charges, but their rivals are members of the Yap family, including brothers Roy and Rey.

Animas reminded all prosecutors of a memorandum issued in May 2005 by Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez directing them to be wary of criminal charges filed against members of the Animas family and their allies with addresses other than Sapang Dalaga.

The modus operandi involves the filing of nonbailable charges like large-scale estafa, murder or kidnapping using fictitious addresses to reroute the subpoenas and mislead prosecutors into believing that the respondents did not answer summonses.

Because the subpoenas do not reach their true addresses, the respondents are unable to submit counter-affidavits and are subsequently charged in court.

When the charges are filed in court, the complainants direct arresting officers to Sapang Dalaga, where the respondents are arrested and charged without bail.

Floirendo drops bid for gov for uncle

DAVAO CITY—REP. ANTONIO "Tony Boy" Floirendo of Davao del Norte has dropped his gubernatorial bid in favor of his uncle, former Gov. Rodolfo del Rosario.

"I believe that this is the next best thing for me to do right now," Floirendo said in a statement sent to the INQUIRER.

The announcement was a family decision, according to Carlos Munda, who handles publicity for both the Floirendo and Del Rosario families.

In the city's race, Mayor Rodrigo Duterte is seeking reelection with his daughter Sara as running mate.

Duterte had earlier said that he would prevent former Mayor Benjamin de Guzman, who is seeking the vice mayoral position, from coming back to City Hall.

Corruption

Once allies, Duterte and De Guzman are now bitter political enemies. The mayor has accused De Guzman of corruption and his return would mean a waste of taxpayers' money.

An ally of Duterte, former priest Leoncio Evasco Jr. has resigned as officer in charge of the city engineer's office to run for mayor in Maribojoc town in Bohol.

In Davao del Sur, three members of the Bautista family want to swap positions.

Running for governor

Rep. Claude Bautista is running for governor to replace his brother, Benjamin Jr. The congressman's post in the second district is being sought by Mayor Franklin Bautista of Malita town, who is giving way to Benjamin Jr.

Claude will face Rep. Douglas Cagas in the gubernatorial race. Cagas is vacating the congressional seat in the first district in favor of his son Mark.

In North Cotabato, Gov. Emmanuel Piñol has abandoned his plan to run for Congress and chose to join the vice gubernatorial race instead.

Vice Gov. Jesus Sacdalan is running for governor under the Lakas-CMD, Piñol's party.

Reelection

The governor's younger brother, Mayor Efren Piñol of Magpet town is seeking reelection while another brother, Vice Mayor Joselito Piñol of Mlang town, is seeking the mayoral post.

Still another brother, Bernardo, is joining the congressional race in the second district. *Reports from Dennis Jay Santos, Charlie Señase and Rizalene Acac, Inquirer Mindanao*

INQUIRER
Mayors push for Vilma

LIPA CITY Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto shares light moments with Rep. Aileen Ermita-Buhain while candidate for vice governor Edwin Ermita looks on during a flag ceremony in front of the Lipa City hall. INQUIRER PHOTO

Vilma running mate files candidacy

BATANGAS CITY—EDWIN ERMITA, former vice president of Rizal Commercial and Banking Corp. and son of Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, filed his certificate of candidacy for vice governor early yesterday.

Ermita, running mate of Lipa City Mayor Vilma Santos-Recto under the Lakas-CMD party, arrived at the Commission on Elections provincial office here at 10:20 a.m. with sister and reelectionist Rep. Eileen Ermita-Buhain and hundreds of political supporters.

Also present were former Justice Secretary Hernando Perez, vice president of Lakas-CMD party; Batangas Vice Mayor Jose Tolentino, Board Member Sergio Atienza, Nasugbu Mayor Antonio Barcelon and other local party leaders.

"Everything's in a festive mood and I hope this will continue," Ermita said after he filed his bid for the province's No. 2 post.

He earlier said on Wednesday's press conference that it was a sacrifice on his part to resign as a banker but that he decided to run because he believed the province needs change in the political system.

Ermita would face Board Member Mark Leviste and actor Christopher de Leon in a three-cornered fight for vice governor.

He dubbed his tandem with Vilma, the "Batangas leadership team," in partnership with the local government units and the people.

He said his platforms would be concentrated on livelihood, education, health, infrastructure, tourism and other programs.

"Everybody must have a share in the province's wealth. It is always important to consult people to address their needs and we'll start with it when we campaign," he said.

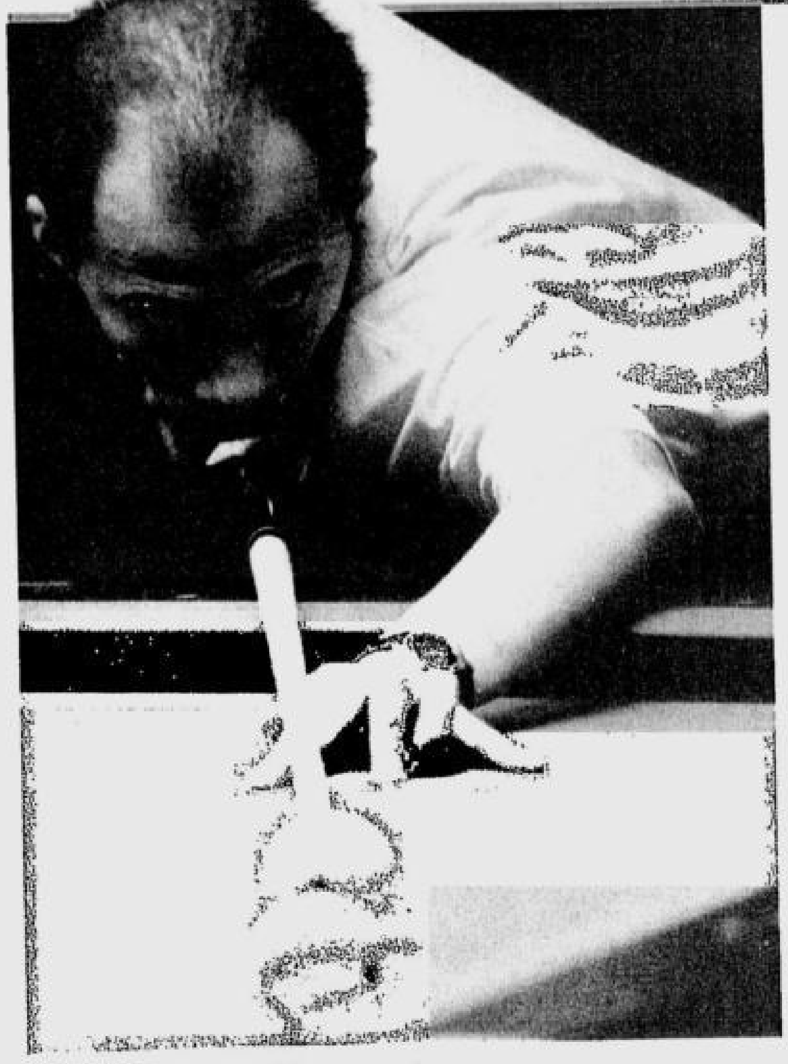
If he gets elected with Vilma, Ermita promised to support her administration.

He reiterated Vilma's promise not to resort to mudslinging but focus on development platforms.

Ermita's sister, Ermita-Buhain, filed her candidacy for the province's first district—which consists of the towns of Nasugbu, Balayan, Tuy, Lian, Calatagan, Calaca, Lemery and Taal. Batangas has four congressional districts.

She is running for her last term against ex-Nasugbu Mayor Raymund Apacible, who filed his candidacy on Tuesday afternoon. *Marlon Alexander Luistro, Inquirer Southern Luzon*

Late SPORTS



DENNIS ORCOLLO: Right on target

NAT'L POOL

Orcollo nips Pagulayan; Lining wins

ALEX PAGULAYAN: Still in contention

WORD POOL LEAGUE CHAMPION Dennis Orcollo subdued defending champion Alex Pagulayan, 9-6, late last night to gain a semis slot in the 2nd BSCP National Pool Championships at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium.

Antonio Lining also advanced following a 9-2 demolition of Ramil Gallego in the other winner's bracket encounter.

The loss sent Pagulayan into a knockout battle with Marlon Manalo today, with the winner getting a crack at Lining for a finals seat.

Orcollo, who earlier made short work of Jharome Peña, 9-1, will also play a waiting game with Lee Vann Corteza and Gallego battling for the right to face him in the semis.

No matter what happens, the six remaining players are assured of slots in this year's World Pool Championships. Pagulayan making it outright as the 2004 edition champion and Corteza qualifying by virtue of his victory in the Japan Open.

The top four in this tournament staking P500,000 to the champion are assured of WPC slots.

Earlier, Gallego trounced Carlo Biado, 9-6, while Lining stopped giant-killer Jomar de Ocampo, 9-6.

Other evening matches saw Manalo subdue OFW Joven Bustamante, 9-4, and Corteza beat Godofredo Ducanes, 9-6.

The 28-year-old Bustamante beat Rodolfo "Boy Samson" Luat, 9-2, and double world champion Ronnie Alcano, 9-3, in yesterday's afternoon side.

In other marquee matches in the one-loss side; Corteza ousted Antonio Gabica, 9-5; Edgardo Acaba nipped fellow OFW Al James Ortega, 9-7; and Manalo beat Eduardo Villanueva, 9-3.

Alcano, hounded by the child abuse charges filed against him by his 14-year-old daughter at the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office on Tuesday, said he aims to bounce back in the inaugural 2007 Guinness Asian 9-ball tour on April 20 in Jakarta, Indonesia.

Meanwhile, Iris Rañola, the 2006 Doha Asian Games 9-ball semifinalist, edged Mary-Ann Basas, 7-6, late Wednesday to join early semifinalist Rubilen Amit, who blanked Minse Grace Mercurio, 7-0, in the winning column.

Rañola will face the winner of last night's Mari Christy Danar-Jingle David tussle today.

Amit, on the other hand, will meet the winner of the Mercurio-Basas match.

Mercurio, top player of the Negros Billiard Stable, edged Michaela Claveria, 7-6, in the loser's side yesterday to stay on track of the P200,000 top prize. *Marlon Beranrdino, Contributor*

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Sta. Lucia pins 6th loss on SMB

By Musong R. Castillo

STA. LUCIA REALTY, WITH KENneth Duremdes and Kelly Williams providing the spark in the fourth quarter, regained its wits after losing a 15-point halftime lead to hammer out a 95-90 win over San Miguel Beer last night in the PBA Fiesta Cup eliminations in Muntinlupa City.

Duremdes, the 1998 MVP while with defunct Swift, came off the bench after a long rest and joined hands with Williams in drilling the baskets that mattered as the Realtors won for just the second time in six games.

More importantly, the victory restored pride in a team which was coming off a humiliating 79-114 loss to Red Bull—the worst in the Realtors' PBA existence—just last week.

San Miguel Beer, on the other hand, slumped to its sixth straight loss, the worst start for the franchise in the last 21 years.

And this one could hurt more, especially after the Beermen had wiped out that 15-point deficit in less than one quarter and appeared to be in total control.

Sta. Lucia employed a 2-3 zone that proved effective, as it bled San Miguel Beer dry almost in every possession, forcing the Beermen to take harried attempts because of the shot clock.

Williams, the top overall pick in this year's rookie draft, went on to finish with 17 points and five rebounds in 39 minutes, while Duremdes had seven of his 12 in the first seven of the fourth that rallied the Realtors.

The Realtors took a 56-41 lead into the third quarter, but saw this evaporate quickly with San Miguel Beer import Paul McMillan hitting 18 of his 31 points in the first nine minutes that had the Beermen leading by as many as seven, 73-66.

Proof that Sta. Lucia's defensive ploy worked was the fact that McMillan was held to four meaningless points in the fourth quarter and San Miguel Beer's total was 13.5 points less than what the Realtors allowed in their first five games.

Sta. Lucia's baskets in that stretch came in trickles, and only the entry of Duremdes late in the third quarter put some order in the Realtors' offense.

Duremdes knocked in five straight points to open up the fourth period, and his two free throws off Brandon Cablay with 4:52 to play shoved the Realtors on top again, 83-82.

The scores:

STA. LUCIA 95—Williams 17, Winston 15, Cabagnot 15, Duremdes 12, Espino 10, Mendoza 10, Aquino 6, Isip 4, Callmag 4, Omolon 2.

SAN MIGUEL BEER 90—McMillan 31, Pena 13, Tenorio 11, Wilson 10, Cablay 10, Calaguio 10, Racela 3, Ildefonso 2, Espinas 0, Adducul 0.

Quarters: 24-27, 56-41, 70-73, 95-90

Pichay lifts chess—NCFP

THE NATIONAL CHESS FEDERATION of the Philippines came to the defense of Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay yesterday, saying he was responsible for boosting local chess. Willy Abalos, one of the directors of the NCFP, said Pichay has never used the organization for his political ends but has in fact helped the sport by donating his own time and funds and raising funds from private donors.

The NCFP lambasted Sorsogon Rep. Francis Escudero for asking for the resignation of Pichay and Bacolod City Rep. Monico Puentevella as head of the NCFP and Philippine Wrestling Federation, respectively. "They are good at finding faults, but are doing nothing to help Philippine sports," Abalos said. "It was Congressman Pichay who helped RP chess when it was in dire straits and did not ask anything in return."

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Star witness reveals payoffs to cops

'Protection money given by Pasig drug lord suspect to police officials'

By Kristine L. Alave

SUSPECTED DRUG LORD AMIN Imam Boratong had senior police officials from various law enforcement agencies on his payroll to protect his illegal drug trade, government witness Samer Palao testified yesterday.

On the last day of his direct examination, Palao identified a certain "Colonel Medina" as one of the policemen who received P300,000 a week from Boratong in exchange for his protection.

Palao added that Boratong even called Medina before the raid to confirm reports that authorities would storm the compound.

Blue book

Palao, the government's star witness in the landmark drug case, said Boratong kept a "blue book" containing the names of policemen who worked for him.

"There were instances when I delivered the money to agencies, like the NBI [National Bureau of Investigation]," Palao told the court.

Boratong, who is now detained at the NBI, is the alleged owner of a residential lot in Brgy. Sto Tomas, Pasig City, which had become the manufacturing and retail base of methamphetamine hydrochloride, popularly known as shabu. He is reportedly the main supplier of the drug in Pasig City, although he also provides shabu to dealers in other parts of the country, including Mindanao.

Palao added that Boratong had protectors and informers embedded in the NBI, the Anti-Illegal Drugs Special Operations Task Force (AIDSOTF), Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), and the Pasig City Police.

In his previous affidavit and testimony, Palao had identified "Colonel Medina" as former Pasig City police chief Sr. Supt. Raul Medina. The official has denied the allegations against him.

Palao also noted that Boratong paid a "Major Galvan," a certain "Colonel Mutya" of the PDEA, a "Major Valeroso" in the National Capital Region Police Office in Bicutan, as well as two AIDSOTF agents he identified as Braulio Basco and Ray Binigay. Palao had said earlier that PO2 Ramil Along was one of Boratong's hitmen.

Tip

Basco and Binigay, Palao added, had tipped him that the shabu compound in Brgy. Sto. Tomas would be raided on Feb. 10, 2006.

Investigators have identified Along as the gunman who killed Boratong's brother-in-law Glicerio Bahande in Brgy. Sto. Tomas early this week.

According to Palao's testimony, Galvan received P200,000 a week from Boratong, while the AIDSOTF agents received P50,000 each a week. Valeroso got P100,000 a week from Boratong. A policeman he identified as Elmer Santiago received P10,000 a week.

Transactions

Palao also revealed he supplied information to the late Chief Insp. Renato Marasigan about the transactions in the shabu dens since 2005.

"I wanted to stop it. I couldn't stomach the murders, the exploitation of minors, and the young girls who were raped and then paid with shabu," he told the court. The witness added that Boratong's clients ranged from 10 years old upwards.

He also testified that Boratong's second wife, Sheryl Molera Boratong, was the head "sistemador" or pusher in the compound. Sheryl lived in the biggest shanty at the entrance of the compound, Palao said.

Sheryl, according to Palao, had five employees under her, all members of her immediate family including her mother, father, and three brothers.

After the hearing, Sheryl told reporters that Palao's statements were lies, adding that Palao was trying to get back at her because she refused to testify against Boratong.

Probers say Quezon City hospital may not be liable for boy's death

By Jeannette I. Andrade

QUEZON CITY POLICE INVESTIGATORS yesterday expressed doubt that the case against the Philippine Children's Medical Center could be brought to the courts, following the result of initial autopsy reports showing that the 9-year old boy had died of cardiac arrest.

SPO1 Rodrigo Barrameda, Criminal Investigation Unit (CIU) investigator, said that since Alvin Mangahas had been suffering from a lingering illness, his death was considered due to "natural causes."

No case

"We cannot file a case against anyone for that. Unless there is a toxicology report saying that an allergic reaction had directly been a factor to his death," Barrameda explained.

Evangeline had accused the hospital staff of allegedly wrongfully administering the antibiotic ceftazidime intravenously to her child and that an allergic reaction had reportedly killed him. Ceftazidime is an antibiotic and antibacterial drug used to treat bacterial infections of the lower respiratory tract, urinary tract, skin, bone and joint, pelvis, and abdomen.

But PCMC director Julius Leociones claimed Alvin had been diagnosed with rheumatic heart disease by Philippine Heart Center doctors since last year. The doctors had recommended surgery to restore the child's health through the replacement of cardiac valves damaged by the disease, Leociones added. But for no reason, the child did not have any operation, but was admitted to the PCMC on March 21 for bronchopneumonia.

The PCMC director explained that ceftazidime was only introduced to the child's system on March 27 to cure the bacterial infection causing his respiratory condition, along with other antibiotics. When Evangeline said her child had the chills, the ceftazidime was stopped.

Alvin exhibited symptoms of heart deterioration and towards midnight, his heartbeat started to weaken. At that juncture, the child's mother blamed the hospital staff for giving the antibiotic to her son, Leociones said. Evangeline then pulled off the intravenous lines from her son's veins, including the line supplying dofamine to his system. Dofamine is a drug intended to strengthen the heart and prevent cardiac arrest, the doctor said.

Evidence

Evangeline reportedly kept the line inside her bag and told the medical personnel that she was keeping it as evidence for the criminal complaint she was going to file against them.

Leociones said that there was also not enough time to replace the intravenous line as medical teams attempted to resuscitate the boy four times until he flat-lined.

Leociones said results of the fact-finding team investigating the incident are expected to come out in a few days. The PCMC would not hesitate to impose sanctions on any erring staff member of the facility, he added.

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Last-minute filers troop to Comelec offices

By Allison W. Lopez, Julie M. Aurelio, Nancy C. Carvajal, Santiago R. Alcantara, Kristine L. Alave and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

ASPIRANTS FOR ELECTIVE POSItions in Metro Manila trooped to the Commission on Elections offices yesterday, the last day for filing of certificates of candidacies (COCs), to beat the deadline.

More than a hundred people filed their candidacies for 32 congressional seats in the 14 cities and three towns in Metro Manila. Congressional candidates file their COCs with the Comelec National Capital Region office. The candidates are mostly spouses, children, or siblings of incumbents.

In Manila, it will be a three-cornered all-star fight for vice mayor with former actors Isko Moreno, Robert Ortega and Cita Astals aspiring for the post.

Moreno and Ortega, who filed their candidacies yesterday, along with actor Yul Servo (real name John Marvin Nieto), a candidate for councilor, were mobbed by Comelec employees who took pictures of their favorites with their cellular phone cameras. Astals filed her candidacy as an independent the other day. Three-term councilor Ortega arrived at the Comelec with Aksyon Demokratiko mayoral candidate Maria Jimenez, younger sister of former Rep. Mark Jimenez. Maria, Ortega and the rest of the "Hulog Ng Langit" ticket were clad in white.

Moreno came with Vice Mayor Danny Lacuna, who is gunning for the city's top post. The last to file his candidacy for mayor, Lacuna said, "Sabi sa Bibliya (The Bible said), 'He who is last shall be the first.'" Lacuna is up against Ali Atienza, son of incumbent Mayor Lito Atienza; Sen. Alfredo Lim; Rep. Rudy Bacani, and Jimenez.

In Pasay City, Rep. Consuelo "Connie" Dy heard Mass before filing her candidacy for mayor at the local Comelec office.

The Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino candidate is running with vice mayor Arvin Tolentino, who also filed his candidacy yesterday. Incumbent Mayor Alan Panaligan is running for congressman for Pasay's lone district.

No opponent

Three mayoral candidates in the Caloocan-Malabon-Navotas-Valenzuela area also beat the deadline yesterday. Reelectionist Malabon City Mayor Canuto Oreta, who is running for a second term under the Lakas-CMD party, had no opponent as of press time.

In Navotas, Rep. Ricky Sandoval and Daniel Bautista filed their COCs for mayor and vice mayor yesterday morning without fanfare. Sandoval is the official candidate of the Liberal Party-Atienza wing. His younger brother Alvin is running for representative of the lone Malabon-Navotas district.

In Valenzuela City, the fight will be between former Mayor Bobbit Carlos and incumbent Sherwin Gatchalian. Carlos filed his COC with running mate Eric Martinez, under the administration's Lakas-CMD. Gatchalian's running mate is incumbent Vice Mayor Antonio Espiritu.

San Juan Mayor Joseph Victor Ejercito, who is running for a third term, filed his COC at exactly 8:43 a.m. yesterday, calling it a "sunrise" filing. The 37-year-old Ejercito said he was not bothered that half-brother Sen. Jinggoy Estrada was fielding his own local candidates because he had the 20 percent anti-(former President Joseph) Estrada faction on his side.

DANNY Lacuna files his candidacy for mayor of Manila together with his vice mayoralty candidate Isko Moreno at the Comelec office in Arroceros.
REM ZAMORA

The senator's "Jinggoy's Choice" included former professional basketball player Philip Cesar for vice mayor; and Bobby Yan, brother of the late teen idol Rico Yan; Ejercito's cousin, Jana Ejercito, and Vic Reyes as councilors.

Former Councilor Jojo Alcovendaz is running against reelectionist Rep. Ronaldo Zamora and Ejercito's rival in the 2004 mayoral election, Eric San Juan. Ejercito's running mate is incumbent Vice Mayor Leonardo Celles Jr.

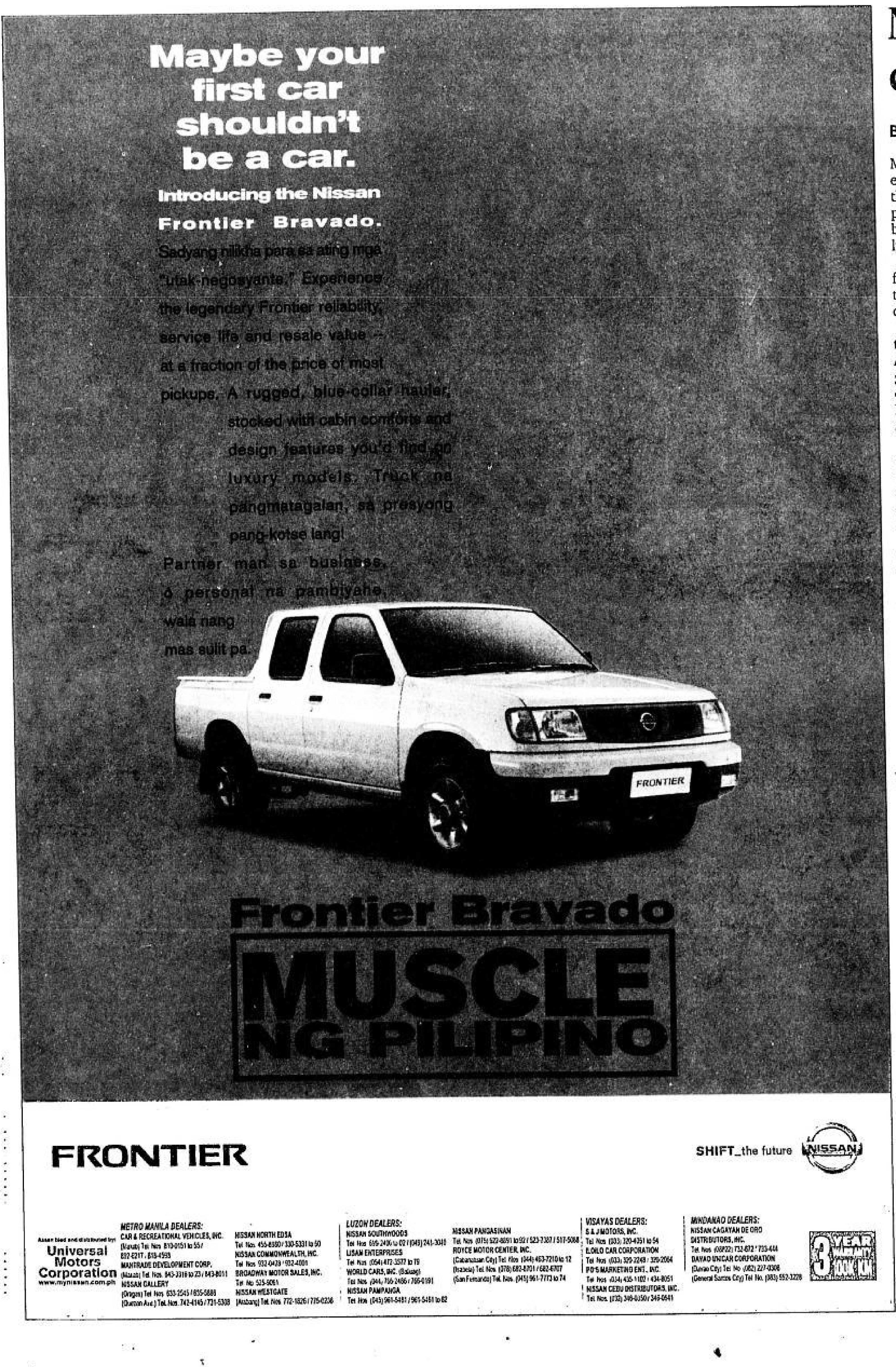
MAYORAL bet Maria Jimenez with running mate Robert Ortega.
REM ZAMORA

BUSINESS leader Noel (Toti) Cariño filed his candidacy for Pasig City's lone congressional seat at the Comelec office in Intramuros last March 27.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Last minute bets

Expected to file her own candidacy for mayor before the deadline was Grace Sto. Domingo Singson, reportedly a relative of administration senatorial candidate Chavit Singson, a nemesis of the Estradas.

Councilor Bobby C. Eusebio, son of incumbent Pasig City Mayor Vicente Eusebio, hopes to fill the seat to be vacated by his father. The younger Eusebio submitted his COC yesterday with his running mate, incumbent Councilor Yoyong Martirez. Eusebio's main rival is incumbent Congressman Dodot Jaworski, who filed his COC last Monday. The Comelec expects more bets to show up before the midnight deadline.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3 YEAR

Makati still opposition country, says Binay

By Julie M. Aurelio

MAKATI MAYOR JEJOMAR BINAY expressed confidence yesterday that his city would remain an opposition stronghold despite the bid by a well-known administration ally to unseat him.

Binay chided his political rivals for openly admitting they wanted to take away the country's financial center from the opposition.

"The admission merely shows that the Makati candidates of Ms Arroyo do not have a program of government and are not concerned about the welfare of Makati residents," the mayor said.

On Wednesday, an Arroyo candidate told reporters that the agenda of their ticket was to "box out" the opposition from Makati and transform it into an administration bailiwick.

The mayor said nearly eight out of 10 residents in Makati were dissatisfied with President Macapagal-Arroyo, as compared to the national figure of six out of ten Filipinos.

"You can knock on 10 doors and eight out of that number (is) not happy with Arroyo," Binay said.

"That is why the fate of Ms Arroyo's candidates is sealed," he added.

Campaign tools

He said his constituents were politically active and were not easily swayed by disinformation and money which, he said, were the main campaign tools of the administration's bets.

Binay, who is also president of the United Opposition (UNO), said Arroyo's candidates were misreading the pulse of the Makati electorate.

"They are free to dream of proclaiming Makati as an Arroyo stronghold, but the reality will kick them hard on election day," he said.

Dengue remains threat even during summer

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

DONT LET DENGUE FEVER SPOIL your summer.

The Department of Health advised people to be on guard all year round as the spread of the dreaded illness had broken seasonal patterns.

Some 880 dengue cases were reported in Metro Manila from January to March 15, the highest among the 16 regions in the country.

The number is slightly lower than the 1,027 cases in the metropolis during the same period last year.

But National Epidemiology Center director Enrique Tayag warned that 26-81 percent of cases were usually not reported.

The second highest number of dengue cases was reported in the provinces of Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal and Quezon, comprising Region IV-A. They registered a sharp increase from 216 cases last year to 457 this year.

Though there had been no rains, Tayag said dengue-carrying mosquitoes could be breeding in water containers like basins and drums.

The incidence of dengue fever had already broken its usual three-year cycles, Tayag said. In the past, cases increased only every three years.

In the past few years it had also been observed that dengue seemed to be present all year round instead of just certain months.

All over the country, 3,509 cases were reported from January to March 15, of which 32 died, according to Department of Health figures.

The figures were lower compared to the same period in 2006, 4,084 cases and 63 deaths, Tayag said.

The Philippine Pediatric Society's Genesis Rivera advised parents to watch out for these symptoms in their children: Fever (for at least two days), headache, nausea, vomiting, appetite loss, abdominal pains, diarrhea, cough and cold, rashes and bleeding.

Fever subsiding after a day or two should not be a source of relief. Intestinal bleeding, a serious complication of dengue, could begin around this time. Rivera warned against the use of insect spray as dengue carriers usually flew low. Repellent lotions should be applied on clothing, not on sensitive children's skin, he said.

BIR says TV executive failed to show company records

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE BUREAU OF INTERNAL REVENUE FILED charges of violating the Tax Reform Act of 1997 in the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office yesterday against Pilipino Cable Corporation president Eugenio Lopez III who allegedly failed to submit his company's financial records to the scrutiny of the tax agency.

Pilipino Cable Corporation (PPC) manages the operations of cable subscriber Sun Cable, a subsidiary of television network ABS-CBN.

The bureau claimed the company failed to present records that would allow it to verify income tax returns previously submitted by Lopez despite personal follow-ups and phone calls.

Lopez reportedly failed to submit the company to the routine verification and audit that should have been conducted last year for taxable year 2004, the bureau said. Failure to comply with the summons carries the penal liability of P50,000 to P100,000.

A statement sent by PCC managing director Larry Ibalio to the INQUIRER said it was "not aware" of any case filed against it. "As far as the PCC is concerned, it has complied with all the requirements set by the BIR. It has dutifully done so in the past and will continue to do so in the future." *With Bayani San Diego*

Comelec wants plebiscites held with—or after—polls

By Nancy C. Carvajal

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS HAS DEcided that plebiscites should be held either simultaneously with or after the May 14 elections.

Comelec Deputy Executive Director for Operations Jose M. Tolentino said the proposed plebiscites involved the creation of new local government units (LGUs) or conversion into cities. Under the law, the creation of a new city has to be ratified by the majority of qualified voters in the affected place "within 30 days from the approval of the act."

"In the en banc meeting (on) March 13, the commission decided that, considering the preparations we are undertaking for the synchronized national and local elections, all plebiscites of whatever nature may be conducted either simultaneously with the May 14 elections, as in the case of Lapu-lapu City, or after the elections," Tolentino said.

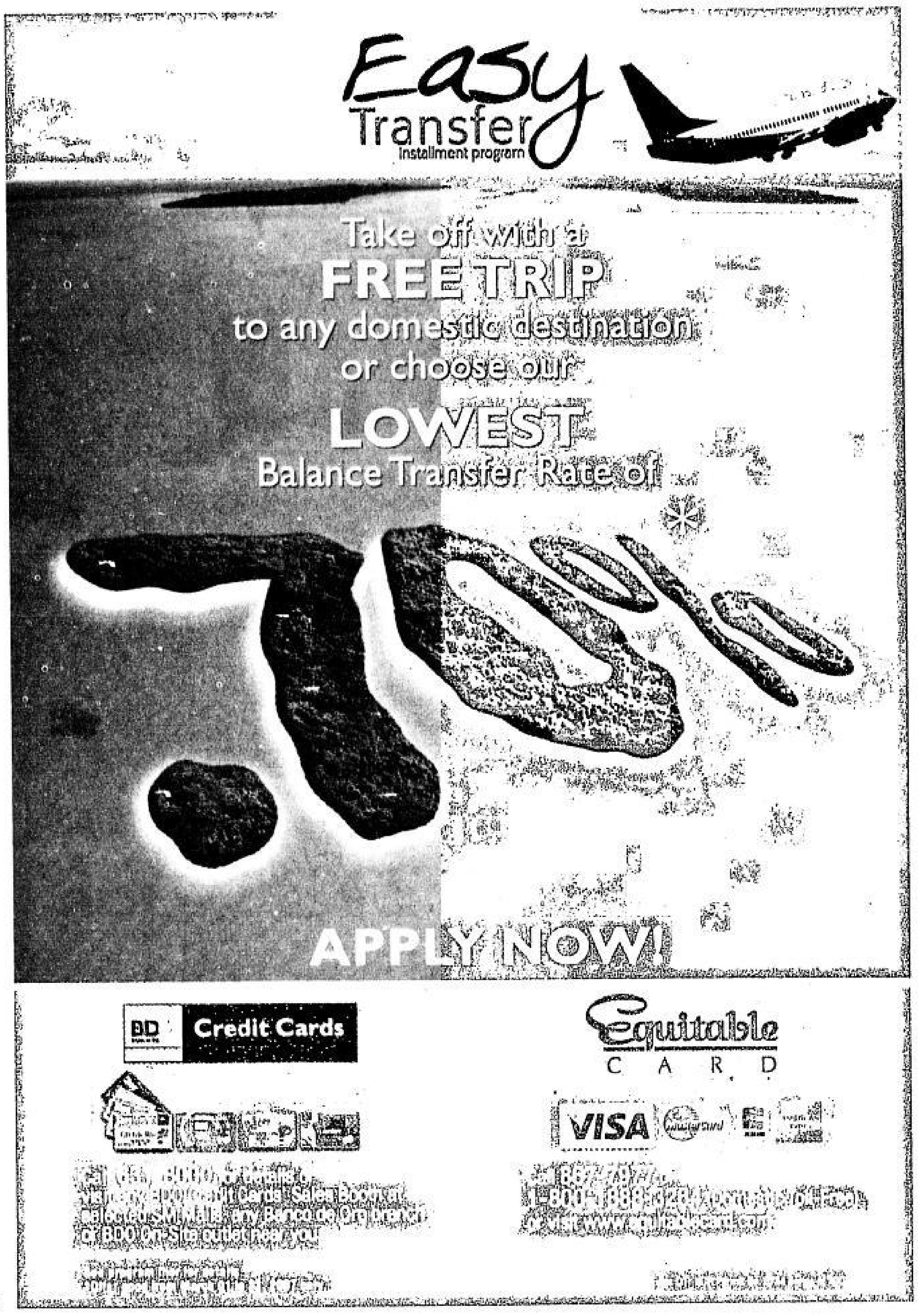
Tolentino conveyed the commission's decision in a letter dated March 17 to Navotas Mayor Toby Tiangco who wants the plebiscite on the town's conversion to city held before March 29.

The bill covering Navotas' conversion lapsed into law on March 10.

Tiangco said earlier that a delay in the plebiscite would deprive residents of more than P200 million in additional allotments, which could be used to improve basic services.

MORE HOMES Gawad Kalinga founder Antonio Meloto (seated, left) and Eveready president and managing director Esteban Vorbeck sign the agreement to build 100 homes in Sitio Ruby, Quezon City, Eastern Samar and Bukidnon.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO



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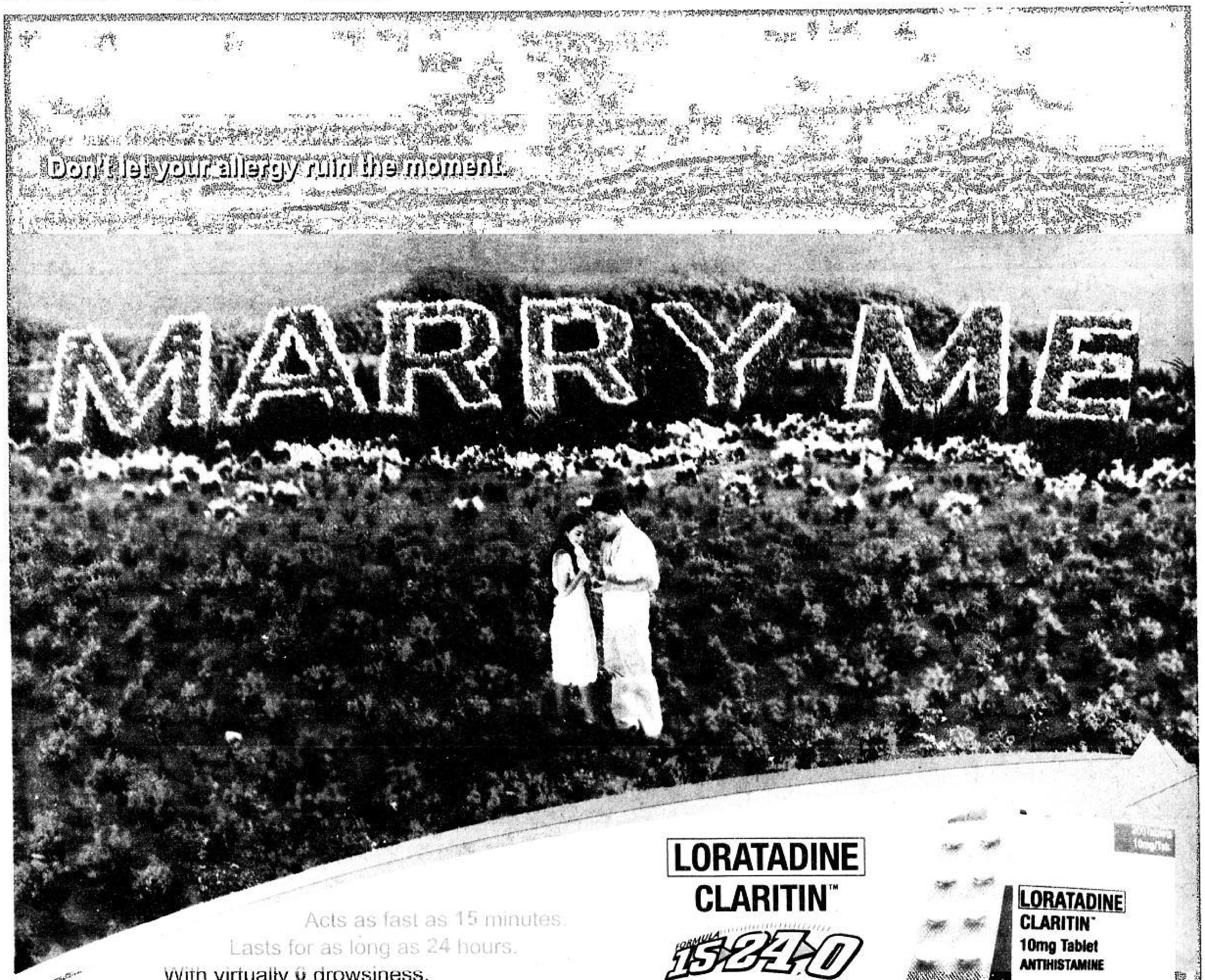

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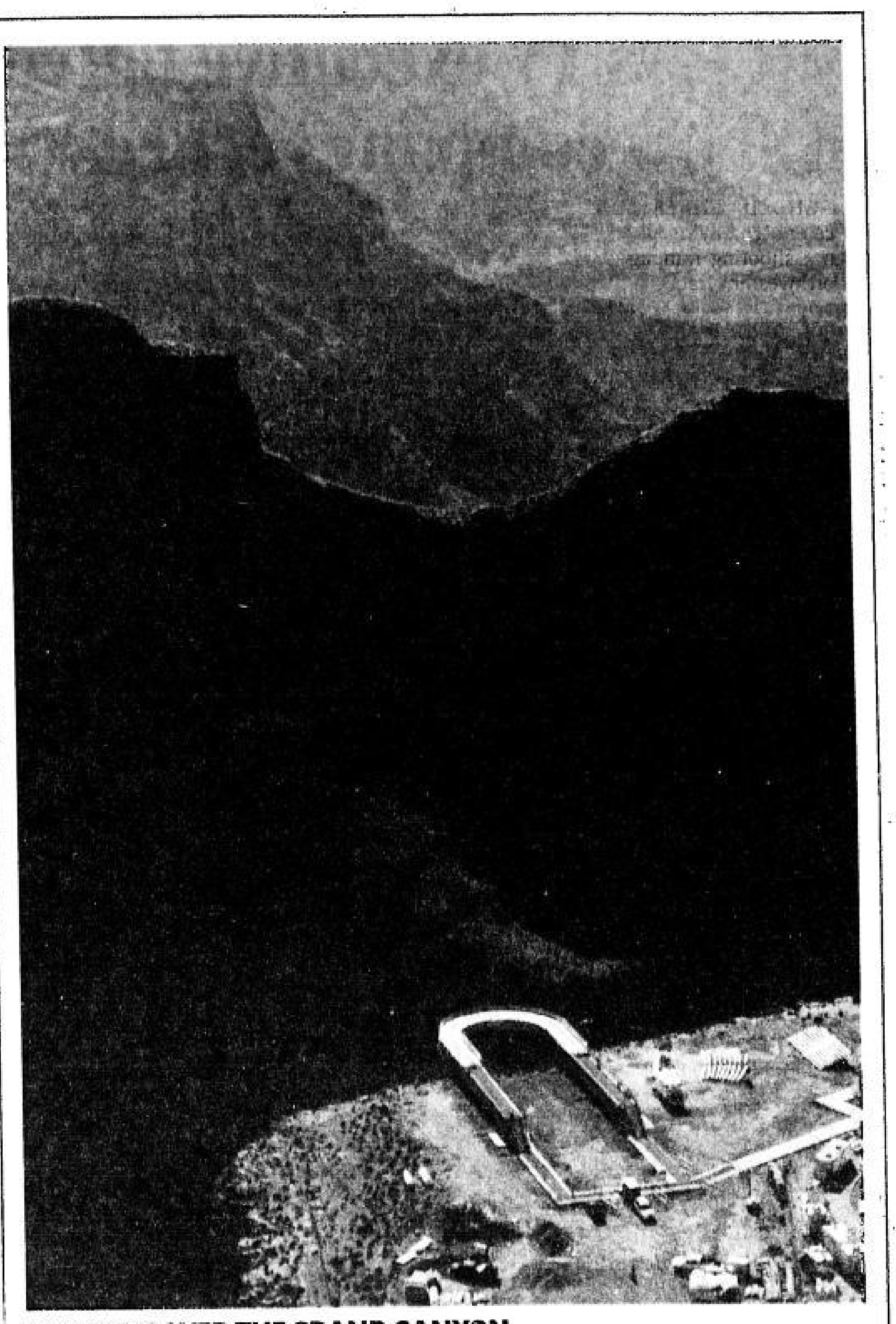

SKYWALK OVER THE GRAND CANYON
The Skywalk hangs over the Grand Canyon on the Hualapai Indian Reservation at Grand Canyon West, Ariz., prior to a grand opening ceremony on March 20. AP

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Israel says Arab peace proposal not good enough

RIYADH—ARAB LEADERS HAVE formally re-launched a five-year-old blueprint for peace in the Middle East, but Israel rejected the plan as it stands, saying on Thursday that it needs negotiation.

The heads of state, on the first day of their two-day summit in Riyadh on Wednesday, adopted a resolution reaffirming their commitment to the Saudi-inspired plan.

The proposal offers Israel peace and normal ties if it withdraws from all land seized in the 1967 war, allows the creation of a Palestinian state and the return of Palestinian refugees.

The heads of state reaffirmed the "commitment of all Arab states to the Arab peace initiative as approved at the Beirut summit in 2002 in all its elements."

They also reaffirmed "their call to the government of Israel and all Israelis to accept the Arab peace initiative and seize the opportunity to resume the process of direct and serious negotiations on all tracks."

On Thursday, however, Israeli Deputy Prime Minister Shimon Peres rejected the initiative as it currently stands and said negotiations were needed.

"There is only one way to overcome our differences, and that is negotiation," Peres told Israeli public radio. "It's impossible to say: You must take what we offer you as is." "With a diktat neither the Palestinians, nor the Arabs nor us will achieve a solution," he added.

Israel rejected the proposal when it was first made, but its leaders have recently spoken of it as a starting point for talks.

The obstacle is the insistence on the right of return of those Palestinians who fled or were driven from their homes during the violence that surrounded the creation of Israel in 1948, and of their descendants.

According to the United Nations, there are now more than four million Palestinian refugees, living mostly in the Palestinian territories, Jordan, Lebanon, Syria and Libya.

Israel fiercely opposes allowing their return, arguing that the influx would effectively erase the Jewish character of the state.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had appealed to Arab states to "begin reaching out to Israel" by building on the 2002 plan. *AFP*

Mammals took their sweet time to flourish, study shows

THE MASS EXTINCTION THAT wiped out dinosaurs and other life 65 million years ago apparently did not, contrary to conventional wisdom, immediately clear the way for the rise of today's mammals.

In fact, the ancestral branches of most mammals, including primates, rodents and hoofed animals, emerged long before the global extinction and survived it more or less intact. But it was not until at least 10 million to 15 million years afterward that the lineages of living mammals began to flourish in number and diversity.

Some mammals did benefit from the extinction, but these were not closely related to extant lineages and most of them soon died off.

These are the surprising conclusions of a comprehensive study of molecular and fossil data on 4,510 of the 4,554 mammal species known to exist today. The researchers reporting the findings in Thursday's issue of the journal Nature said it was the first virtually complete species-level study of existing mammals.

Writing in the journal, the leaders of the project said the "fuses" leading to the explosive expansion of mammals are not only very much longer than suspected previously, but also challenge the hypothesis that the mass extinction at the end of the Cretaceous period had "a major, direct influence on the diversification of today's mammals."

They said their analysis of more than 40 lineages of existing mammals showed that diversification rates "barely changed" in the aftermath of the extinctions at the boundary of the Cretaceous and Tertiary periods. The transforming changes started 10 million years later and lasted until about 35 million years ago. *NYT*

Iraq Shiites, police kill 70 in revenge attacks

BAGHDAD—SHIITE MILITANTS AND POLICE enraged by deadly truck bombings went on a shooting rampage against Sunnis in a northwestern Iraqi city on Wednesday, killing as many as 70 men execution-style, officials said, in the latest eruption of sectarian violence outside the capital.

Hospital officials in Tal Afar raised the toll in the Tuesday bombings to 80 killed and 185 wounded.

Gen. Khourshid al-Douski, the Iraqi army commander in charge of the area, said one of the trucks exploded after the driver lured people in a predominantly Shiite neighborhood to the site by telling them he was distributing free flour as a gift from a humanitarian organization.

The bombing caused surrounding buildings to collapse, leaving huge piles of concrete and bricks dusted with white four.

Videotape from Tal Afar was broadcast Wednesday night and showed a man dead in the front seat of his car. Men and women carried the limp bodies of children powdered with flour. Others dug through the rubble with their bare hands in search for survivors.

The devastation triggered the outburst of revenge among Shiites in the religiously mixed city, 420 kilometers (260 miles) northwest of Baghdad. Gunmen stormed into Sunni neighborhoods overnight and officials said between 45 and 70 people were gunned down.

Al-Douski said 70 were shot in the back of the head and 40 people were kidnapped. Thirty were wounded.

Witnesses said relatives of the Shiite victims in the truck bombings broke into Sunni homes and killed the men inside or dragged them out and shot them in the streets.

Outraged Sunni groups blamed Shiite-led security forces. Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki's office ordered an investigation and the US command offered to provide assistance.

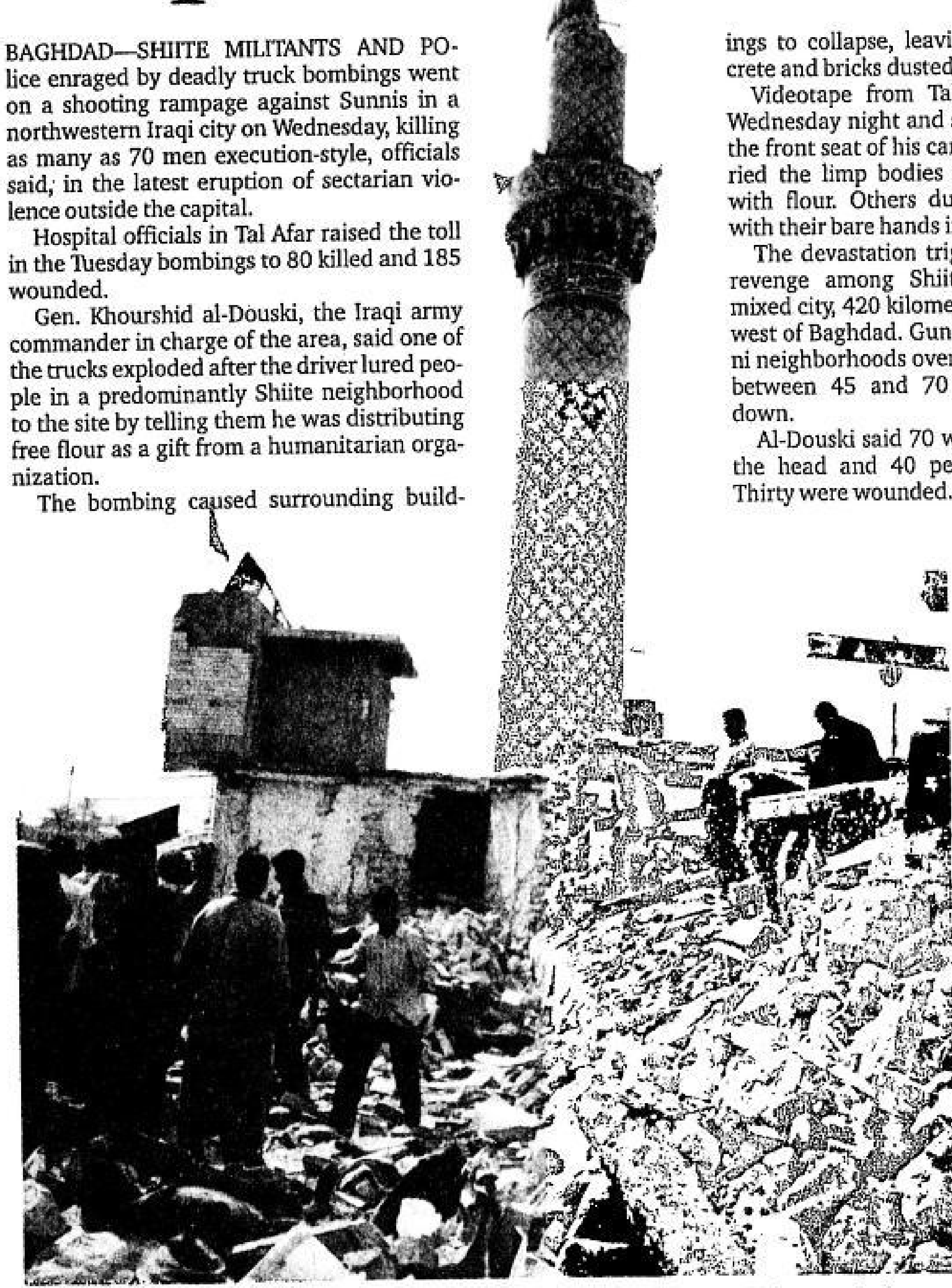
The savage killings coincided with the US Senate debate Wednesday on a bill that would set a spring 2008 timetable for withdrawing American troops. Democrats in Congress are acting on growing voter impatience with the war, but US President George W. Bush declared the deadline would have disastrous repercussions for both countries.

The hard-line Sunni Association of Muslim Scholars said the revenge killings were evidence "of the clear plot and coordination between the militias and the government forces of interior and defense."

The Iraqi Accordance Front, the biggest Sunni parliamentary group, said the slaughter proved the need for an overhaul of Iraq's Shiite-dominated system.

"If yesterday's attacks were carried out by unidentified terrorists, today's events were conducted by well-known criminal policemen and they must be punished," Sunni lawmaker Dhafer al-Ani said. "The whole situation in Iraq needs to be reconsidered and a quick solution is needed to the political process."

Tal Afar, 150 km east of the Syrian border, is mainly populated by ethnic Turks, with Shiites making up about 60 percent of the 200,000 residents. *AP*



PEOPLE go through ruins of al-Hadi mosque in the town of Haswa, Iraq, 50 km south of Baghdad, March 25. Eleven people were killed and 45 were wounded when a suicide bomber exploded a truck in front of the mosque Saturday. AP

Democrats pile pressure on Bush over Iraq

WASHINGTON—DEMOCRATS ARE plowing ahead with efforts to force President George W. Bush to change course in Iraq as the Senate nears a vote on a bill calling for a pullout of US troops by next year.

The Senate could vote Thursday on a war funding bill that includes a binding provision to withdraw US troops from the war-torn country, where more than 3,235 American soldiers have died, by March 31, 2008.

Bush reiterated Wednesday his pledge to veto the legislation if it crosses his desk, but Democrats are pressing the president to sit down with lawmakers to find common ground.

"Let us sit down together to do what is right for the American people, to address the war in Iraq, so that we can bring it to an end and bring our troops home safely and soon," said House Speaker Nancy Pelosi.

"The toll that it's taking in lives and limbs, the toll that it's taking on us, the strength of our security, the toll it is taking financially and in our reputation in the world is one that is too great," she told a news conference.

The House of Representatives already passed last week its own $124-billion version of the emergency spending bill with a deadline to get troops out of Iraq by Aug. 31, 2008.

Democrats, who won control of Congress in November elections marked by voter discontent over the war, also got a major boost Tuesday when the Senate narrowly rejected, 50 to 48, a Republican attempt to strip the pullout deadline from the spending bill.

Pelosi and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid also sent Bush a letter Wednesday, warning that his insistence that he will veto the bill will "needlessly delay funding for our troops."

"Mr. President, this is the time to sit down and work together on behalf of the American people and our troops," they wrote.

"We stand ready to work with you, but your threats to veto a bill that has not even been presented to you indicate that you may not be ready to work with us," they wrote. "We hope that is not the case."

The draft Senate legislation would impose a binding requirement for troop withdrawal to begin 120 days after passage, with a goal of removing all but a token force in Iraq by March 31, 2008.

But Bush said any such measure would play straight into the hands of the enemy.

"The consequences of imposing such a specific and random date for withdrawal would be disastrous," Bush said. "Our enemies in Iraq would simply have to mark their calendars.

"Some Democrats believe that by delaying funding for our troops, they can force me to accept restrictions on our commanders that I believe would make withdrawal and defeat more likely. That's not going to happen," the president said.

The measures on early troop withdrawal squeaked by in both chambers by razor-thin margins, and Democrats conceded that they were unlikely to muster the two-thirds vote to override a presidential veto. *AFP*

US prosecutors fired for not backing Bush, says ex-justice official

WASHINGTON—EIGHT FEDERAL prosecutors were fired last year because they did not sufficiently support President George W. Bush's priorities, but there was not a campaign to intimidate prosecutors, says a former Justice Department official who is to testify before a congressional committee Thursday.

Kyle Sampson, who resigned his post as Attorney General Alberto Gonzales' chief of staff earlier this month over the furor, said that he believes the standard was legitimate.

He disputed Democratic charges that the firings were a purge by intimidation and a warning to the remaining prosecutors to fall in line. Nor, he said, were the prosecutors dismissed to interfere with corruption investigations.

"To my knowledge, nothing of the sort occurred here," Sampson said in remarks prepared for delivery Thursday before the Senate Judiciary Committee.

Democrats viewed his testimony as key to finding the answers to the political question and a second, investigative query: Did Gonzales and the Justice Department provide misleading accounts of the run-up to the firings?

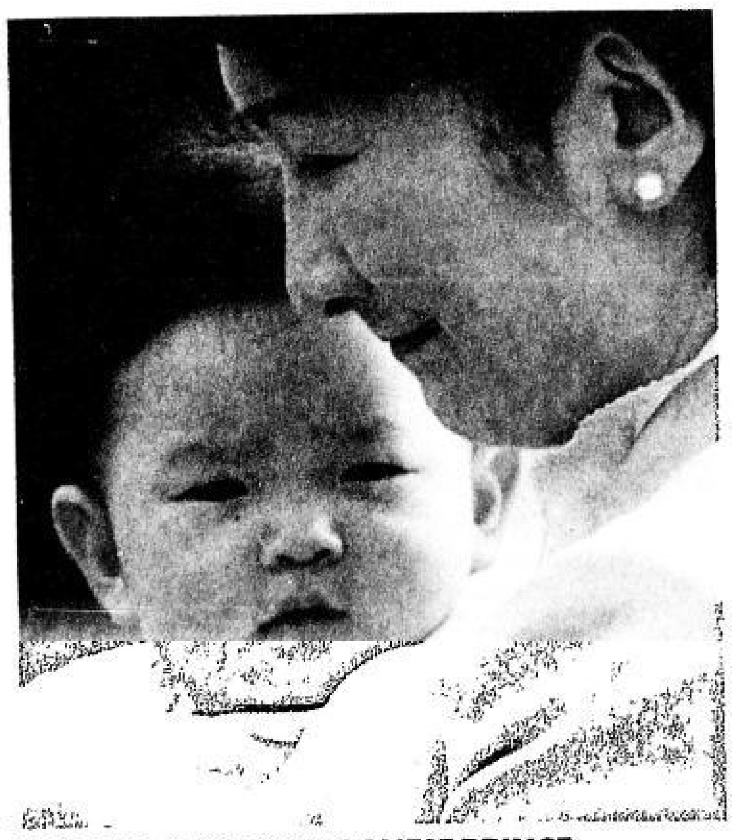
The answer to the second question is yes, according to a Justice Department letter accompanying new documents released hours before Sampson's appearance.

The Justice Department admitted Wednesday it gave senators inaccurate information about the firings and presidential political adviser Karl Rove's role in trying to secure a US attorney's post in Arkansas for one of his former aides, Tim Griffin.

Justice officials acknowledged that a Feb. 23 letter to four Democratic senators erred in asserting that the department was not aware of any role Rove played in the decision to appoint Griffin to replace US Attorney Bud Cummins in Little Rock, Arkansas.

Acting Assistant Attorney General Richard Hertling said that certain statements in last month's letter to Democratic lawmakers appeared to be "contradicted by department documents included in our production."

That admission, only hours before Sampson's televised testimony, took some of the sting out of Democrats' key pieces of evidence that the administration had misled Congress. *AP*



FINALLY, A YOUNG JAPANESE PRINCE
Japan's Princess Kiko (right) carries her son Prince Hisahito as they arrive at the Imperial stock farm in Takanezewa town, 100 km north of Tokyo, March 29. REUTERS

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Captured Britons paraded on Iran TV

TEHRAN—IRAN AIRED the first pictures of British sailors and marines captured in the Gulf last week as London pressed for access to the 15 personnel whose detention has set off a major diplomatic crisis.

The only woman sailor was shown in the broadcast Wednesday saying they had trespassed into Iranian waters, but Britain reacted angrily to the detainees being paraded on state television and demanded their immediate release.

It was the first time the 15 had been seen since they were seized at gunpoint by Iran during what Britain said was a routine patrol of Iraqi waters in the northern Gulf.

London on Wednesday froze ties with Tehran over the crisis and protested over the footage, saying Iranian promises to release the only woman soon were insufficient.

The television showed the Britons having a meal and featured Faye Turney, 26, wearing a black headscarf and saying: "Obviously we trespassed in the waters."

"They were friendly, very hospitable, very thoughtful. Nice people," she said of her captors, who have kept them at a secret location and not allowed them any contact with British diplomats.

ALALAM EXCLUSIVE

FAYE Turney, the only woman crew member of the 15 British sailors and Marines detained at sea last week, speaks on Iranian TV March 28. REUTERS

Britain said it was waiting to hear directly from Iranian officials following press reports that Tehran will grant access to the group.

"We await further details from the Iranian government on their undertaking to act on our request for consular access to the Royal Navy personnel," said a Foreign Office spokesperson. "We continue to press strongly for their immediate release."

Foreign Secretary Margaret Beckett said she was "very concerned" about the pictures and "any indication of pressure on or coercion of our personnel" who she said were on a routine operation in accordance with international law.

The crisis erupted at a time of high international tensions over Iran's controversial nuclear program which the West fears could be a cover for ambitions to build atomic weapons.

Iran insists the 15 had "illegally entered" its territorial waters, but on Wednesday said that Turney would be released in one or two days.

However, a British Foreign Office spokesperson said: "Obviously the release of one person, one of the military personnel and not the others, is not good enough."

Beckett on Wednesday also announced a freeze in official dealings with Iran.

"We need to focus all our bilateral efforts during this phase on the resolution of this issue," she said. "We will therefore be imposing a freeze on all other official bilateral business with Iran."

Britain also revealed evidence that it said showed the 15 were in Iraqi waters when detained.

British military chiefs used maps and GPS coordinates to affirm that the navy personnel were 1.7 nautical miles within Iraqi waters at the northern end of the Gulf.

The Iranian embassy in London insisted that the British personnel had "illegally entered" up to 500 meters within Iranian territorial waters.

British Prime Minister Tony Blair emphasized his country's determination in the dispute.

"It is now time to ratchet up the diplomatic and international pressure," Blair told lawmakers, adding that "there was no justification whatever" for the detention of the sailors.

There has been speculation that Tehran could use the British personnel either to trade for five Iranians being held by US forces in Iraq or to seek concessions over Iran's nuclear drive. *AFP*

Photo shows: Samsung Electronics Co., Senior-Vice President Ike Chung, Smart Administration and Materials Managements Division Head Ramoncito S. Fernandez, Samsung Electronics Phils, Corp, President and CEO Spencer Shim, and Smart Wireless Consumer Division Head Danilo J. Mojica.

Smart partners with Samsung in promoting Mobile TV

Leading mobile communications service provider Smart Communications has partnered with Korean-based mobile handset manufacturer Samsung Electronics in promoting and supplying DVB-H-capable phones in the Philippines. Smart and MediaQuest Holdings through its subsidiary Nation Broadcasting Corp. are conducting Mobile TV broadcast trials in key areas nationwide. Samsung, for its part, has already lined up its DVB-H hand set offerings with several full-featured Mobile TV-capable phones slated for local launch within the first half of the year.

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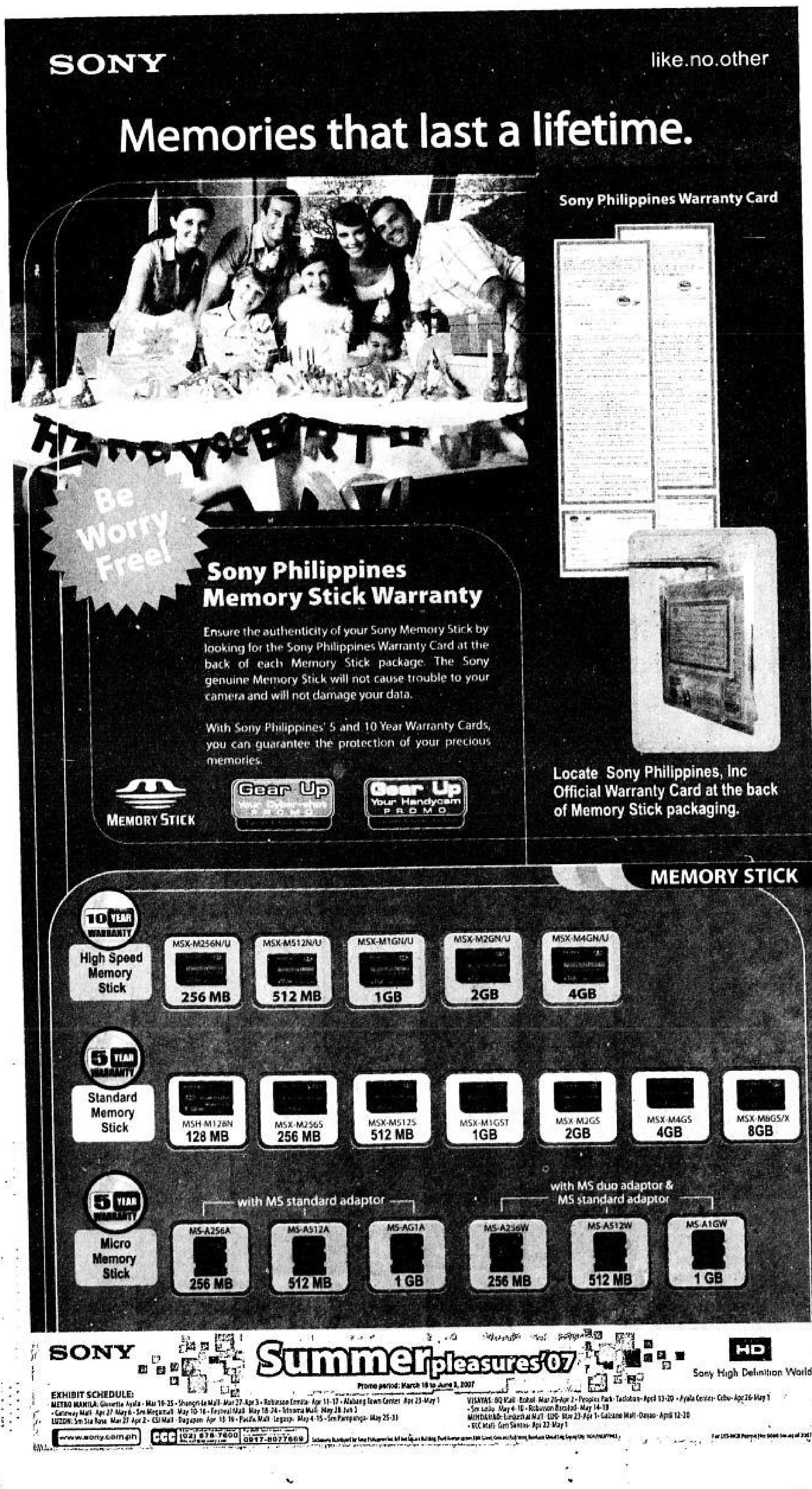
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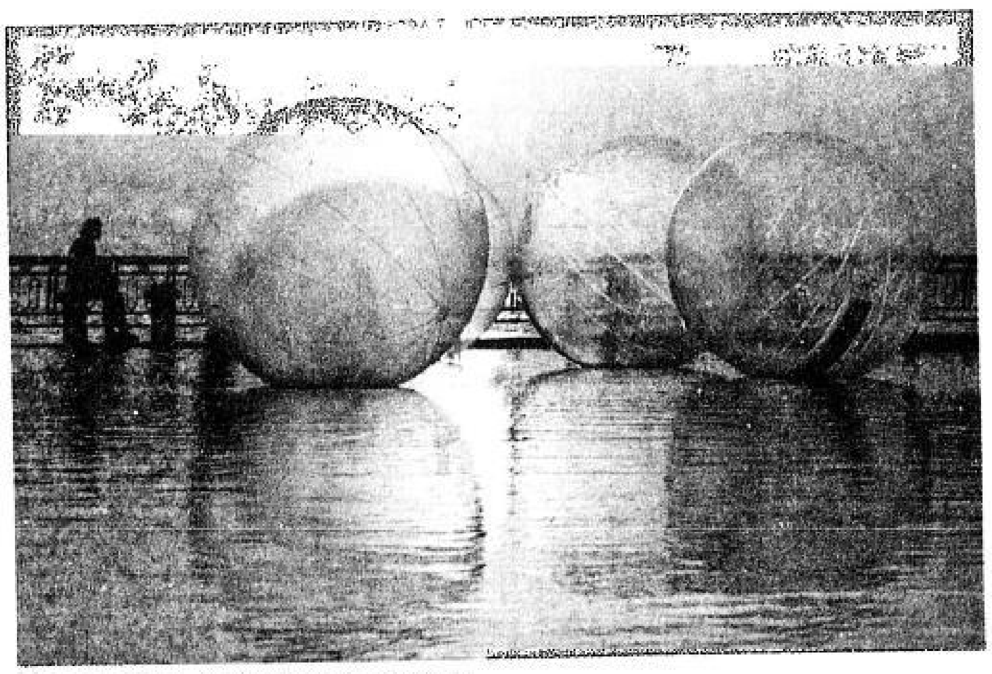

OLD CHINA, NEW WATER TOYS

A vendor waits for customers to play inside plastic spheres near the seashore in Sanya, south China's Hainan province March 28. REUTERS

Street violence by Paris youths intrudes again into French politics

PARIS—FRANCE'S TOP PRESIDENTIAL candidates seized on a new campaign issue on Wednesday after the police fought gangs of youths for seven hours at a railroad station here. Stores were destroyed, the pall of tear gas filled the station, Gare du Nord, and 13 people were arrested.

The episode, described as "urban guerrilla warfare" by the new interior minister, Francois Baroin, was a reminder of the tensions still simmering 18 months after rioting swept immigrant neighborhoods across France. It foreshadowed the task ahead for the candidate who is elected president in May.

The police said the trouble began Tuesday afternoon at the subway station at Gare du Nord when an illegal immigrant from Congo jumped a turnstile and then tried to punch an agent who demanded to see his ticket. Gare du Nord, where Eurostar trains travel to London and Brussels, is also the main station for trains to the troubled northeast suburbs.

When security forces arrested the man, the police said, 200 to 300 youths joined a rampage that lasted until nearly midnight, attacking officers with metal bars, smashing shop windows in an underground commercial center, injuring eight ticket agents and a police officer, and shouting slogans against Nicolas Sarkozy, the presidential front-runner.

Thirteen people were taken into custody, among them five minors and the Congolese man, 32, who, the police asserted, had a long record of criminal activity.

There has been sporadic violence in housing projects in some suburbs since the 2005 riots, but the events on Tuesday were the worst unrest in the city since last spring, when demonstrations over a proposed labor law degenerated into street fighting.

Sarkozy, the candidate of the center-right, who resigned Monday as interior minister to focus on his campaign, called the violence in Paris unacceptable and congratulated the police for "doing their job." *NYT*

Malaysia introduces see-through ballot boxes for 'more transparency'

KUALA LUMPUR, MALAYSIA—IN A BID TO make voting more transparent, Malaysia's Election Commission has introduced see-through ballot boxes, newspapers reported Thursday.

The new boxes, which can hold some 700 ballot sheets, will be used in the next general election, and replace the usual black metal ballot boxes, The Star quoted Election Commission Chair Abdul Rashid Abdul Rahman as saying.

"We have been very transparent so far and we would like to show that we only tally whatever ballots which have been inserted into the box," Abdul Rashid said, according to both The Star and New Straits Times.

Although Abdul Rashid appeared to have made that statement in jest, he was also taking a swipe at opposition parties who claim that the Election Commission is biased in favor of the ruling party.

The opposition also says the commission has not always been open about the way it conducts vote counting, making it possible for fake ballots to be brought into counting booths.

The main reason for introducing the translucent plastic ballot boxes, however, is that they are much lighter, weighing only a third as much as the metal ones, news reports said.

Abdul Rashid was not immediately reachable at his office for further details. *AP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Serena stays on course; Nadal, Roddick tumble /A33

SPORTS

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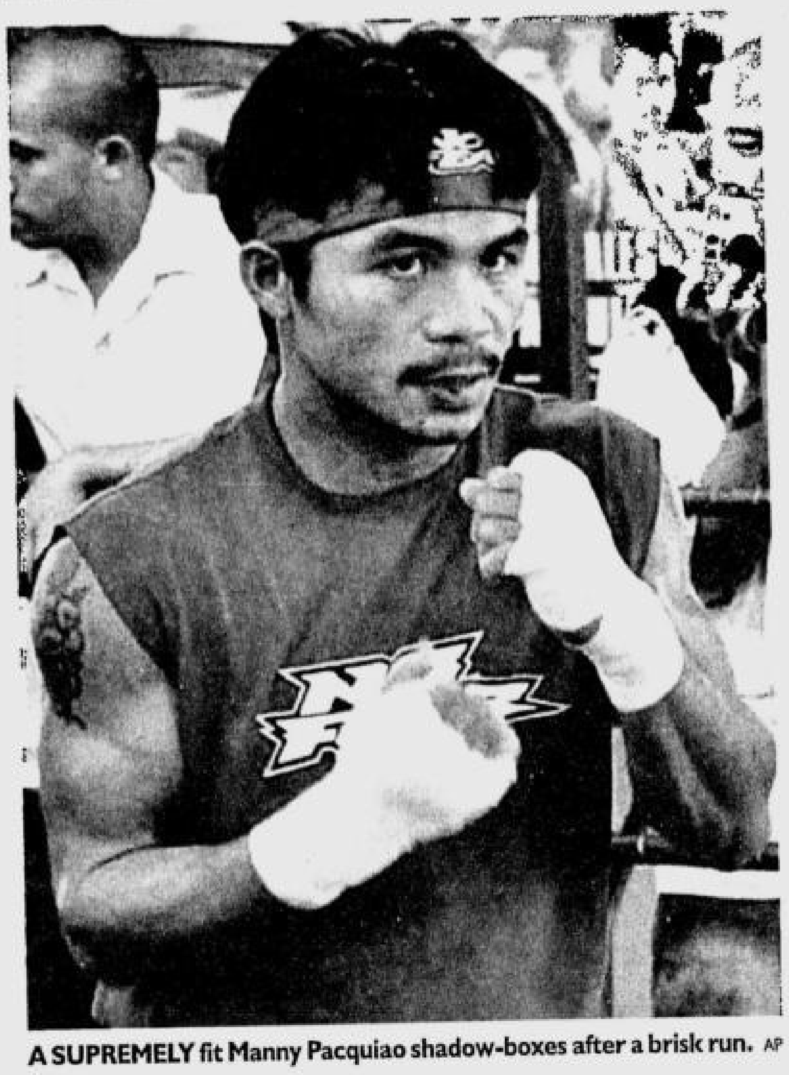
Impressive Pacquiao hits peak form early



A SUPREMELY fit Manny Pacquiao shadow-boxes after a brisk run. AP

UNABLE TO SPAR FOR A WHILE, MANNY PACQUIAO SWEATed it out in the gym and on the road yesterday.

IMPRESSIVE/ A34

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UICHICO

REYES

Baguio clash for fans finest all-star sides

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE BASKETBALL ASSOciation's finest, as determined by the fans, head to chilly Baguio next month for the annual All-Star Game.

The league makes a stop in La Union for the side events.

Members of the RP squad training for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association championship in May and the Fiba-Asia in July will be there—about the only time they will be exposed locally.

The South shoots to win over the North for the second straight year, as voting for members of each squad has started through the votes from paying patrons of each venue that the league plays.

La Union will host the Blitz Game and the Skills Challenge on April 25 and 26 before the entire entourage motors up to Baguio for the All-Star Game and the Three-Point and Slam Dunk contests on April 28 and 29.

"Baguio City and San Fernando, La Union hosting the PBA All-Star caravan this summer is simply perfect, the two provinces known not only for their passion for basketball, but also as favorite destinations of many during this time of the season," said league commissioner Noli Eala.

"So we're expecting the All-Star festivities to be another major hit this year."

Nationals Asi Taulava, Jimmy Alapag, RenRen Ritualo, Mark Caguioa, Jayjay Helterbrand, Danny Seigle, Dondon Hontiveros, Tony dela Cruz, Mick Pennisi, Ranidel de Ocampo and Kerby Raymundo will be present.

Chot Reyes, on leave from San Miguel while handling the National quintet, and Ginebra mentor Jong Uichico will call the shots in the annual classic after steering the Beermen and the Kings to the Philippine Cup Finals.

Roger Yap of Purefoods was the hero in the South's 122-120 victory last year.

Considered shoo-ins for slots are the James Yap, the Purefoods gunslinger leading the locals in scoring in the current Fiesta Cup, along with Air21's Gary David and super Sta. Lucia rookie Kelly Williams.

The Sophomores battle the Rookies in the Blitz Game even as Niño Canaleta is expected to defend his slam dunk title like William Antonio in the 3-point shootout.

Kings, Express out to crowd Bulls on top

BARANGAY GINEBRA COACH JONG UICHIco is still not convinced with his Gin Kings' game.

Never mind if their two key stars are missing. Or even if the Kings are riding a four-game winning streak.

"We still need to improve on several aspects of our game," Uichico said Sunday night. "Like tonight, we became stagnant (in one stretch) and allowed the game to be close.

"We have to work on that and be truly consistent."

Ginebra tries to extend the longest PBA Fiesta Cup streak while also gunning for a share of the elimination-round lead at 7:20 tonight when the Kings clash with Talk 'N Text at the Araneta Coliseum in Cubao.

The absence of Mark Caguioa and Jay-Jay Helterbrand has so far been of little consequence to Ginebra's campaign with its crack bench stepping up.

Import Rod Nealy has also been impressive in displaying all-around talent which has been key for the Kings so far.

Rudy Hatfield is leading the local Ginebra crew in support of Nealy, who will be ranged against another left-hander, JJ Sullinger, in what could be an explosive face-off.

Against the Phone Pals, the Kings are heavily favored to improve to 5-1 and join the Bulls at the top, the same aim that the Air21 Express will have when it collides with the Welcoat Dragons in the 4:35 p.m. appetizer.

The Express saw their four-game winning streak end on Wednesday versus Red Bull, 116-111, but they are again expected to come out sharp tonight and rebound from that setback.

Welcoat, on the other hand, is languishing near the bottom at 1-4, after dropping its last three outings.

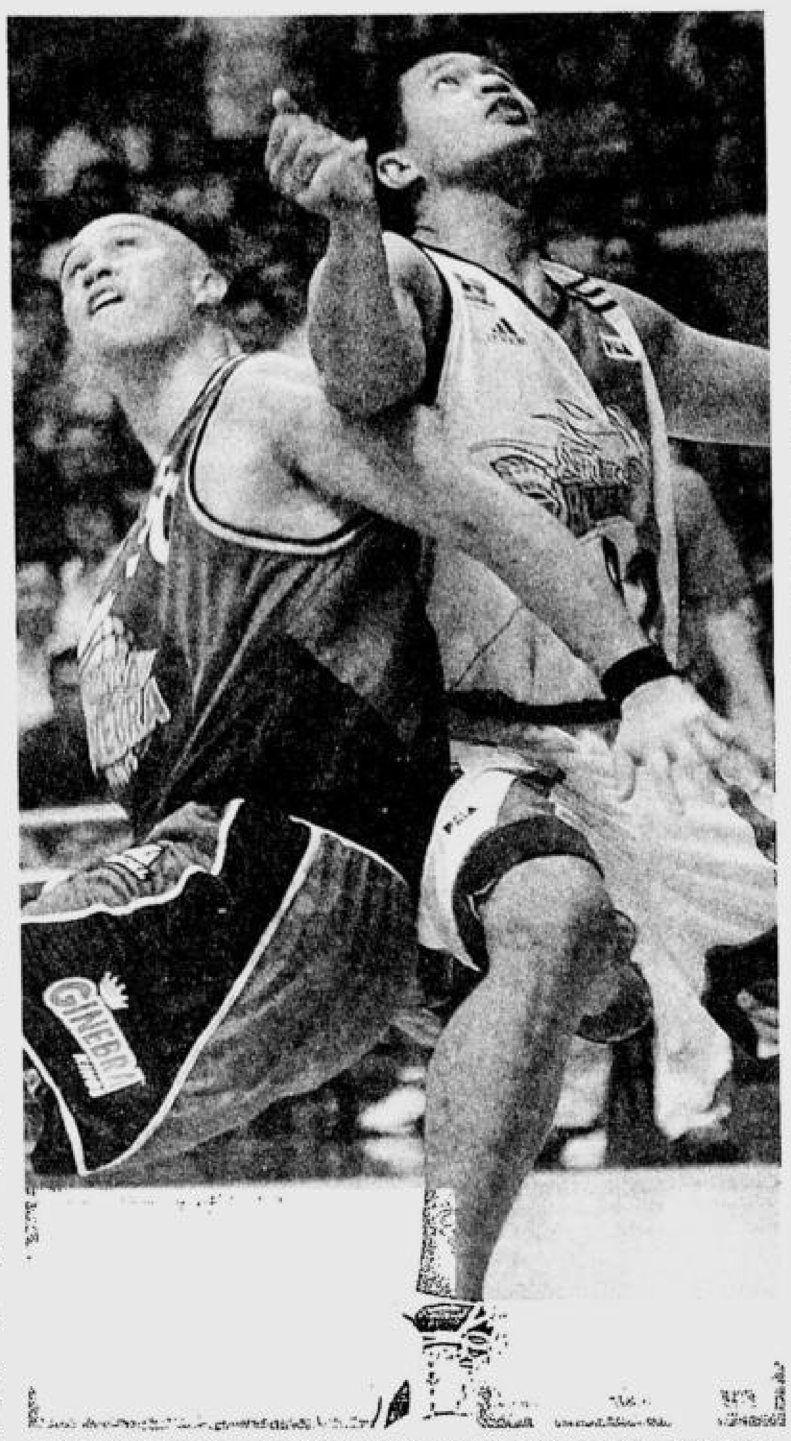
Talk 'N Text demolished the Dragons, 100-78, in Cabanatuan City last Saturday after no local scored in twin digits for the night.

Only Charles Clark, Welcoat's beefy import, finished with significant numbers.

Even Jay-R Reyes, the crack rookie center who will obviously be the cornerstone of Welcoat in the years to come, was held to just five markers, while second import Alex Compton delivered only two points. *Musong R. Castillo*

STANDINGS	W	L
Red Bull	5	1
Air21	4	1
Alaska	4	1
Ginebra	4	1
Coca-Cola	3	3
Talk 'N Text	2	3
Purefoods	2	4
Sta. Lucia	1	3
Welcoat	1	4
San Miguel	0	5

GAMES TODAY
(*Araneta Coliseum*)
4:35 p.m.—Air21 vs. Welcoat
7:20 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs. Barangay Ginebra



GINEBRA'S Eric Menk (left) jockeys for position with San Miguel Beer's Romel Adducul under the basket during a recent game. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Final rites for 'Jun B' tomorrow

BERNARDINO

LOCAL BASKETBALL will bid its final farewell to the well-loved Emilio P. Bernardino Jr. tomorrow.

Bernardino, who died of heart attack on Friday night, will be laid to rest at the Heritage Memorial Garden in Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City.

Before interment, a funeral mass will be held at 8 a.m. at the Main Altar-Bahay Kubo of the Magallanes Parish. Tonight, a necrological mass will be held at 8 p.m. also at the Magallanes Parish.

Sport luminaries have been paying their last respects to Bernardino, the longest-serving commissioner of the Philippine Basketball Association.

The ninth-day Novena Mass will be on April 1. Its venue will be announced later.

Bernardino, who would have turned 60 on Nov. 9, left behind wife Mimi and children Nolan, Stephanie, Kristine and Vera and son-in-law Rishi and daughter-in-law Marga.

The family has requested that friends and sympathizers omit flowers and forward all cash donations to the Kamay ni Hesus Foundation through Father Joey Faller.

Popularly known as "Jun B" and "Ibok" to family and close friends, Bernardino took over as PBA commissioner at the end of the 1994 season and went on to steer the league to its glory years.

Bernardino first came to the league in 1979 as assistant coach to Fely Fajardo in the Tefilin squad, before becoming the famous "Man on the Ball" as a courtside reporter in 1982.

He later worked behind the scenes as executive secretary, then as executive director, deputy commissioner and commissioner. He retired in 2003.

Jasmine W. Payo

Teachings from Tillman's tale

By Percy D. Della

COMMENTARY

SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA—IN TODAY'S sports universe, professional athletes who earn megabucks are never content.

They yearn for more money, and ultimately, crave for the bigger prize their newfound riches beget—power.

We are not safe from the likes of sports pros that salivate at the thought of becoming congressmen and senators—even if they woefully lack the skills to legislate.

Such a stereotype is silly, of course, if you think of the short life and times of sports star Pat Tillman.

Tillman desired not to play to the peanut gallery as a politician engulfed in patriotic fervor while flush with congressional pork.

Heck, he even eschewed the chance to play before millions of fans as a sports millionaire.

He traded green bucks for green duffel bags.

All he wanted was to become a soldier.

If the name sounds familiar, it's because Tillman was in the news again today, almost three years after he died—a casualty in the war against terrorism.

Tillman, a United States Army Ranger was killed while scaling the side of an Afghan canyon in April of 2004. His death, first reported as the outcome of a Taliban ambush, was ultimately ruled the result of friendly fire.

The Pentagon reaffirmed its findings this week. It portrayed his death as a tragic mistake caused by the fog of war.

News reports said the soldier's family immediately labeled the latest explanation as a "travesty," accusing Army brass of "a conspiracy to deceive" and of exploiting Tillman to boost recruitment.

Tillman gained international attention when he gave up a National Football League career to join the military. He was so moved by the terror-laden events of Sept. 11, 2001, he turned down a three-year $3.6 million contract with the Arizona Cardinals.

Out of loyalty to the Cardinals, he had earlier refused an offer of $9 million from the St. Louis Rams for a five-year deal.

Tillman's main concern shifted in 2002 when he took note of his grandfather's service during World War II. Then a 27-year-old athlete, Pat said the old man was at Pearl Harbor but that he himself hadn't "done a damn thing as far as laying my life on the line."

So in May of that year, after returning from a South Pacific honeymoon with wife Marie, Pat rocked the sports establishment with a gutsy move:

He enlisted as a US Army Ranger.

Pat died, but his larger-than-life image will always emerge through the mist of a sport's fan's mind.

***

Cinderella has not been invited to the big ball this year. The NCAA Final Four in Atlanta Saturday (Sunday morning in Manila) will feature seeded teams UCLA, Florida, Georgetown and Ohio State.

For sure, the Georgia Dome will be crawling with NBA scouts, who will look intently at probable picks. Despite the emergence of Eastern Europe and South America as hotbeds of NBA draft choices, the NCAA remains the main breeding ground for future stars of the world's foremost professional basketball tournament.

SPORTSWATCH

'Bakbakan' entries' banding set April 9

OVER 1,000 ENTRIES IN THE 2007 National Bakbakan 10-Stag Derby are expected to join the simultaneous banding of cockerels across the country on April 9 by the National Federation of Gamefowl Breeders (NFGB).

Last year's Bakbakan stagfest, organized by the premier organization of 25-breeder groups nationwide, drew an eye-popping record total of 1,272 entries.

Breeders from Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao are vying in the country's biggest and most prestigious stag derby with a guaranteed prize of P15 million. Eliminations and semifinals, both 3-stag battles, will be staged in different cockpits.

The 4-stag championship round blasts off on Nov. 13, 15, 20, 22 and 27 at the Araneta Coliseum.

The Laguna GBA became the latest addition to the NFGB roster and is headed by Sonny Lagon, Pol Estrellado, Peter Uren, Boy Marzo, Gen. Jaime Caringal and Joey Mendoza. With the NFGB's Ricardo Palmares Jr. and Fred Katigbak as guests of honor, the group will hold its their general membership meeting on March 31 at Max Restaurant, San Pablo City.

Only cockerels with the fourth original primary feathers on each wing shall be qualified for banding. These will be undertaken by 30 certified NFGB screening officials from 15 member groups. The teams are equipped with Bio Security Kits, disposable boots, and will be transported to farms from Aparri to Zamboanga by Purina Gamebird chows, the official partner of NFGB.

MCC active chess tourney Sunday

THE MCC 1900-BELOW ACTIVE CHESS TOURNAMENT GETS GOING AT 11 a.m. on Sunday at the upper second floor of St. Francis Square (behind SM Megamall) in Mndaluyong City. The one-day event is open to amateurs, beginners, unrated and rated players with active ratings not over 1900. It will employ the six-round Swiss system and time control of 25 minutes per player. Up for grabs is a total pot of P10,000 with the champion pocketing the top prize of P3,000. Likewise, a consolation award of P500 will also be awarded to top category performers in the unrated and kiddies (12-under) event.

'Michael One' dominates Makati derby

MICHAEL ONE, AN ENTRY OF LONGTIME PARTNERS SANDY SUR AND EDwin Yap; posted four wins and a draw on Monday to emerge as solo champion in the Pinoy Cockers Association of the Philippines (PCAP) 5-Cock Derby at the Makati Coliseum. Michael One improved its standing in the PCAP Cocker of the Year race with 18.5 points. Meanwhile, the Fiscalizer 5-Cock Derby, with P1 million at stake, follows immediately at the same venue on Saturday. The event, which will feature some 80 fights, will be supported by members of the PCAP, the National Cockers Association and Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association. Entries and their weights must be presented at Makati Coliseum today.

Pasay 4-cocker blasts off today

AN IMPRESSIVE CAST OF PARTICIPANTS FIGURE IN A VERITABLE BATTLE of champions in the TL San Luis 4-Cock Derby starting at 5 p.m. today at the Pasay City Cockpit. More than 70 fights are on tap in the derby sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000, said host Tony Lasala who will be supported in the event by the Pasay Cockpit Cockers Association, Gentlemen Cockers Association of the Philippines and the National Cockers Association. Among the bidders are Patrick Antonio, Gov. Ito Ynares, Jun Santiago, Pol Estrellado, Pepito Ngo, Mayor Nene Aguilar, Gerry Ramos, Tony Antonio, Lito Roque, Efren Canlas, Lito Orillaza, Ramon Mancenares, and the Super Pacman group.

Marcelo just too quick in kart kickoff

CARMONA, CAVITE—DISPLAYING impressive course mastery, Jean Stefano Marcelo dominated the kickoff leg of the 2007 Shell Helix Superkarting Series by sweeping all three races at the Carmona Circuit Philippines recently.

Marcelo zoomed ahead early to top the 20-lap race of the premiere Formula 125 Open class in 14 minutes and 48.213 seconds.

The 16-year-old racer also logged the day's fastest laptime of 44.141 seconds.

Mike Casimiro clocked 13.965 seconds later to finish second place with a time of 15:02.178.

Former Cadet champion Ken Monzones settled for third, followed by Marcelo's father, former jetski champ John Marcelo, and Matthew Edmunds.

Javi Benitez of JeT Racing, Joey Orduna of Tuason Racing/Ready 2Race and brothers RR and Vencer John Suba were also among the big winners in the series opener.

JOEY Orduna (188) paces Renz Pazcoguin (94) and Franco Reyes (121) as they negotiate a bend in the hotly contested Mini ROK race at the Carmona Circuit Philippines. CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Benitez beat Roby Benito by the slimmest of margin—just 0.074 seconds—to rule the combined ROK Jr. and Rotax Max Junior classes.

Orduna won an even tighter match, edging Franco Reyes by 0.038 for the Mini-ROK crown.

RR Suba upstaged Christian Gaddi to top the Cadet 60, while older brother Vencer John swept all three races to capture the Formula SL crown over contenders Bryan Mercado, Renz Pazcoguin and newcomer Paolo Ferrer.

The Shell E-10, a gasoline-blend fuel with 10 percent ethanol, was introduced in the races as karting become the first motorsports event to comply with the Department of Energy's campaign for the use of alternative fuels. *Jasmine W. Payo*

Dy, Dandan send off favored foreign foes

DENISE Dy returns to Thai Noppawan Lertcheewakarn, whom she bested, 6-2, 7-5. RYAN LIM

By Marc Anthony Reyes

KYLE JOSHUA DANDAN AND DENISE DY SCORED upset victories against their foreign rivals yesterday to barge into the quarterfinals of the 18th Mitsubishi Lancer international junior tennis championships at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

The 17-year-old Dandan, seeded 13th here, made it very clear he wants to leave the junior scene on a high note as he finished off third seed Peng Hsien-ying of Chinese Taipei, 6-4, 6-3, in the day's opening match.

Dandan, on target to breaching the top 90 in the world junior rankings, used his familiarity with his foe, better physical conditioning and his vaunted forehand to score the victory in one hour and 15 minutes in the searing heat.

"I know his game very well," said Dandan, whose recent setbacks in tournaments in Malaysia and Thailand pulled him down to 118th from 92nd in the world rankings.

He attacked Peng's weaker backhand all match long, drawing unforced errors from the visibly drained visitor.

"I really want to leave the juniors with a high ranking, I played very well today," added Dandan, who will next test the mettle of Slovakian qualifier Borut Puc, who advanced at the expense of Milos Sekulic of Sweden, 7-5, 6-2.

The ninth-seeded Dy used her hustle in the second set to contain Thailand's Noppawan Lertcheewakarn, 6-2, 7-5, and also make the next round.

For beating the seventh-seeded Thai, Dy will now take on third seed Chang Kai-chen of Chinese Taipei. Chang bundled out 16th seed Australian Sally Peers yesterday.

Australian top seed John Patrick Smith hurdled 16th seed Indian Yuki Bhambri, 6-2, 6-4, to also advance to the quarterfinals along with compatriot and sixth seed Andrew Thomas who outlasted Chinese Taipei's Yang Tsung-hua, 7-6 (8), 6-2.

Also making it to the last eight of the boys' bracket were Australia's Bernard Tomic, Thai fourth seed Kittipong Wachiramanowong, Croastia's Silvio Dadic and Australian second seed Stephen Donald.

Tomic beat No. 7 Nikita Zotov of Russia, 6-2, 7-5; Wachiramanowong routed Sweden's Rasmus Jonasson, 6-1, 6-0, Dadic prevailed over No. 8 Eugen Bradzil of Slovakia, 6-4, 6-1; and Donald bested Japan's Tadayuki Longhi, 6-1, 6-2.

In girls' play, former champion and top seed Sacha Jones of New Zealand slipped past Kanyapar Narattana, 6-0, 6-2, while No. 8 Ling Zhang of Hong Kong ripped Japan's Shiho Akita, 6-0, 6-1.

Canada's Anne Christy Voicu defeated Russia's Margarita Edinarova, 6-1, 7-6.

Valencia five downs Montaña in OT

VALENCIA CITY—VALENCIA'S GOLDEN Harvest pulled off a narrow 89-81 overtime victory over Montana Pawnshop-Davao Wednesday to tie idle Tagaytay Spring Cooking Oil for the lead in the 2007 NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the city gym here.

Veteran Dennis Concha, prized rookie Ian Saladaga and Nat Cruz sparkled in the extra period to give Mayor Jose Galario Jr.'s cagers their second straight win in the tourney supported by Sulpico Lines, Yahoo! Philippines, Spring Cooking Oil, San Miguel Beer, Caltex, Sun Cellular, Firefly Lightings, Molten, Nature's Spring, BasketballTV, and Viva Prime Channel.

The Jewelers of businessman Armando Quibod bungled a chance to win in regulation when Bob Cozy Ilanga split his charities with only six-tenths of a second left.

"We're lucky Bob (Ilanga) missed one of his free throws," said coach Noli Tagsip. *"Malaking bagay sa 'min ang panalong ito."*

Saladaga, a former CESAFI most valuable player while playing for University of San Jose-Recoletos, paced Valencia with 22 points.

Cruz also shone with 17 points and 13 rebounds in the game marked by 12 deadlocks.

Ex-pro Henry Fernandez and Ilanga combined for 40 points for Montana, but they failed to score when the Jewelers needed them most.

Meanwhile, the Pagadian Explerers and MP Pacman Gensan Warriors are locked in a fierce battle in Pagadian at presstime last night.

The scores:

VALENCIA 89—Saladaga 22, Cruz 17, Concha 15, Adams 10, Berami 9, Clavel 6, Cesar 3, Nasaid 2, Dragon 2, Bolias 2, Malcontento 1, Maraon 0.

DAVAO 81—Fernandez 24, Ilanga 16, Ayson 10, Lamocha 8, Jawod 8, Abanes 6, Braga 5, Canlas 4, Quibod 0.

Quarters: 21-20, 39-39, 58-57, 72-72 (reg.), 89-81 (OT)

Clark International Speedway

CLARK SPEEDWAY BACKER: Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. chair and president Ed Chua (fourth from left) and Kilton Motors Corp. president Johnny Tan seal with a handshake Kilton's support for the construction of the Clark International Speedway in Clark Field, Pampanga. Looking on (from left) are Ramon del Rosario, Shell country coordinator for Downstream One; Lyndon Lumain, Shell Lubricants sales manager; Bobby Kanapi, GM for external affairs; Ed Dalisay, Shell Bitumen account manager); Sammy de Guzman, GM for retail-Philippines; and Nelson Gayola, marketing manager of Kilton Motor Corp.

Poker satellite tourney slated at Airport casino

THE AIRPORT CASINO FILIPINO in Parañaque will host the first Metro Manila satellite/qualifying tournament for the third Philippine Poker Tour (PPT) Million-Peso Hold'em Championship tomorrow. Registration starts at 1 p.m., an hour before the start of the competition.

Two more satellite winners—Pat Mendoza and Lady M, joined the list of players who will participate in the grand finals slated July 7-8.

Mendoza and Lady M finished 1-2 in the satellite/qualifying tournament held last Saturday at Casino Filipino Tagaytay.

Winners of satellite tournaments are awarded guaranteed seats to the grand finals. Non-winners can still join the finals by paying the tournament fee of P30,000 and registration fee of P3,000.

Qualifying/satellite tournaments are scheduled in the following venues for the month of April: San Mig Alabang Town Center, every Wednesdays and Fridays, Airport Casino (April 14), Hyatt Hotel and Casino (April 21), CF Lahug (April 21) and CF Angeles (April 29).

Details of prize structure and tournament rules are posted in the official PPT website, www.PhilippinePokerTour.com. Interested parties may also call the PPT Secretariat at 817-9092 or 812-0153.

Margallo, Binas lead RP pole vault bets

UAAP CHAMPION JEROME MARGALLO AND PALARONG PAMBANSA RECORD holder Dyundi Binas will go up against the region's top pole vaulters when the 3rd Philippine Pole Vault Festival fires off today at the entertainment plaza of the SM Mall of Asia in Pasay City. Doha Asian Game silver medalist Rosalinda Samsu of Malaysia is expected to lead the foreign participants from Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and Australia. Former Southeast Asian Games winner and Philippine Pole Vault Association president Emerson Oblena will also conduct a crash-course seminar to participating students after the 9 a.m. opening ceremony.

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Brief Description	: Construction of a 4-Storey Building
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)	P58.800.000.00
Contract Duration	Six (6) Months

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility	April 10-17, 2007 – VPA Office, TSU, Tarlac City
2. Issuance of Eligibility Forms	April 10-17, 2007
3. Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	April 20, 2007 not later than 4:00p.m., VPA Office, TSU, Tarlac City
4. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	April 20, 2007
5. Issuance of Bid Documents	April 20, 2007
6. Site Inspection	April 24, 2007 @ 10:00a.m.
7. Pre-bid Conference	April 24, 2007 @ 2:00p.m. Venue: Audio Visual Room, 2nd Flr Administration bldg., TSU, Tarlac City
8. Receipt and Opening of Bids	May 8, 2007 @ 10:00a.m. Venue: Audio Visual Room, 2nd Flr Administration bldg., TSU, Tarlac City

The BAC will issue to prospective bidders Eligibility Forms at VPA Office, 2nd Floor, Administration building, Tarlac State University, Tarlac City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of One Thousand Pesos (P1,000) to the TSU-Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Seventy Five Thousand Pesos (P75,000) to the TSU - Cashier.

The Tarlac State University assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:
(Sgd.) Myrna Q. Mallari
BAC Chair

Dates of Publication (PhilGEPS): *March 28, 2007 to April 3, 2007*
Newspaper: *PDI (March 30, 2007)*
Website: www.tsu.edu.ph
(PDI--March 30, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Office of the President
Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council
HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD

Board of Commissioners

RESOLUTION NO. 802
Series of 2007

AMENDING RULES III AND X OF THE 2004 RULES OF PROCEDURE TO INCORPORATE RULES ON MEDIATION

WHEREAS, Republic Act No. 9285, otherwise known as the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Act of 2004, declares it the policy of the State to actively promote party autonomy in the resolution of disputes and encourage the use of ADR as a means to speedy and impartial justice;

WHEREAS, Executive Order No. 523 Series of 2005, Instituting the Use of Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Executive Department, mandates the offices under the Office of the President to develop and institutionalize an ADR Program;

WHEREAS, there is a need to incorporate the mediation process in the Rules of Procedure of this Board;

WHEREAS, consistent with the thrust of ADR, there is also a need to strengthen the internal grievance mechanism in homeowners associations;

WHEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED AS IT IS HEREBY RESOLVED, that the Rules of Procedure of this Board be amended as follows: "

1. Sections 1 and 2 of Rule III, (COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION, SUMMONS AND ANSWER) are hereby amended to read as:

"RULE III
COMMENCEMENT OF ACTION,
SUMMONS AND ANSWER

Section 1. When action is deemed commenced. – An action is deemed commenced upon the filing of a verified complaint with the Regional Office of the Board, in three (3) copies and in such number of copies as there are respondents, with supporting documents. THE FOLLOWING SHALL BE ATTACHED TO THE COMPLAINT UPON FILING:

A. PROOF OF PAYMENT OF FEES
B. VERIFICATION
C. A certification of non-forum shopping which complies with Supreme Court Circular No. 28-91, as amended [shall be attached to the complaint.]
D. IN HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS CASES, A CERTIFICATION ISSUED BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE ELECTION COMMITTEE IN CASES INVOLVING ELECTIONS, GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE, OR ANY OTHER COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED TO RESOLVE THE MATTER IN CONTROVERSY AT THE ASSOCIATION LEVEL, STATING UNDER OATH THAT THE PARTIES HAVE BEEN INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN PROCEEDINGS TO SETTLE THE DISPUTE BUT THAT NO AMICABLE SETTLEMENT WAS REACHED.

NON-COMPLIANCE WITH ANY OF THE ABOVE REQUIREMENTS SHALL BE A GROUND FOR DISMISSAL OF THE COMPLAINT. (a)"

2. Rule X of the present rules (Conciliation Conference and Resolution) is hereby amended as follows:

"RULE X
[CONCILIATION] MEDIATION [CLARIFICATORY
CONFERENCE] AND RESOLUTION

SECTION 1. *MANDATORY MEDIATION.* – THE CONDUCT OF MEDIATION IN ADVERSARIAL CASES FILED BEFORE THE REGIONAL OFFICES IS MANDATORY. HOWEVER, MEDIATION SHALL STILL BE AVAILABLE AT ANY STAGE OF THE ADJUDICATION PROCEEDINGS, EVEN ON APPEAL AND EXECUTION, PRIOR TO THE FULL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION, UPON THE REQUEST OF BOTH PARTIES. (n)

SECTION 2. *CONFIDENTIALITY OF MEDIATION PROCEEDINGS.* – ALL INFORMATION OBTAINED DURING THE MEDIATION PROCEEDINGS SHALL BE CONFIDENTIAL. SUCH CONFIDENTIALITY SHALL BE GOVERNED BY SECTIONS 9, 10, 11 AND 12 OF REPUBLIC ACT NO. 9285. (n)

Section [1] 3. *MEDIATION [conciliation] conference.* – Upon receipt of the answer, the Arbiter shall summon the parties to a MEDIATION [conciliation] conference [to explore the possibility of an amicable settlement] AND THEREAFTER ENDORSE THE CASE TO THE MEDIATION UNIT FOR ASSIGNMENT TO A MEDIATOR. (a)

SECTION 4. *ROLE OF THE MEDIATOR.* – PRIOR TO THE CONDUCT OF THE PROCEEDINGS, THE MEDIATOR SHALL EXPLAIN TO THE PARTIES THE OBJECTIVES, NATURE AND RULES OF THE MEDIATION PROCESS AND, UPON THE PARTIES' AGREEMENT TO SUBMIT TO THE SAME, PROCEED TO FACILITATE COMMUNICATION AND NEGOTIATION IN ORDER TO ASSIST THE PARTIES IN REACHING A VOLUNTARY AGREEMENT REGARDING THEIR DISPUTE. (n)

SECTION [2] 5. *APPEARANCE OF PARTIES MANDATORY.* – THE APPEARANCE OF PARTIES IN THE MEDIATION PROCEEDINGS IS MANDATORY. In case the parties CANNOT BE [are not] personally present, their representative [or counsel] shall be clothed with the proper special power of attorney or board resolution, as the case may be, WITH FULL POWER to enter into a COMPROMISE AGREEMENT OR settlement. Such authority shall be presented before the commencement of the MEDIATION proceedings. (a)

Section [2] 6. *Effect of non-appearance in MEDIATION [conciliation] conference.* – Where a party fails [or refuses] to appear PERSONALLY OR THROUGH A REPRESENTATIVE during the scheduled MEDIATION [conciliation] conference, the party present may move for termination of the conference AND CONTINUATION OF THE PROCEEDINGS BEFORE THE ARBITER [and submission of the case for resolution in accordance with Section 10 of this rule]. OTHERWISE, THE MEDIATOR, MOTU PROPRIO OR UPON REQUEST OF THE PARTY PRESENT, SHALL RESET THE MEDIATION CONFERENCE AND CAUSE THE ISSUANCE OF NOTICE OF SUCH RESETTING. (a)

Section [4] 7. *Compromise agreement; JUDGMENT UPON COMPROMISE.* – If a[n amicable settlement] COMPROMISE IS REACHED, THE AGREEMENT SHALL BE REDUCED IN WRITING, SIGNED BY THE PARTIES AND ATTESTED BY THE MEDIATOR WHO SHALL THEN RETURN THE CASE TO THE ARBITER TOGETHER WITH THE AGREEMENT. FORTHWITH, THE ARBITER SHALL RENDER judgment [shall be rendered] based on the compromise agreement WHICH SHALL BE IMMEDIATELY EXECUTORY AND NOT APPEALABLE [duly signed by the parties, or their duly authorized representatives]. (a)

SECTION 8. *TERMINATION OF THE MEDIATION CONFERENCE.* – WHERE NO COMPROMISE OR SETTLEMENT IS REACHED WITHIN THIRTY (30) DAYS FROM THE DATE OF THE INITIAL CONFERENCE, THE MEDIATOR SHALL TERMINATE THE MEDIATION PROCEEDINGS UNLESS BOTH PARTIES AGREE TO AN EXTENSION. UPON TERMINATION, THE MEDIATOR SHALL FORTHWITH RETURN THE CASE TO THE ARBITER WITH A CERTIFICATE ATTESTING THAT RULE X, SECTION 1 OF THESE RULES HAS BEEN COMPLIED WITH. (n)

Section [5] 9. *Position paper and draft decision.* – WHERE THE MEDIATION IS TERMINATED AND THE CASE IS RETURNED FOR CONTINUATION OF THE ADJUDICATION PROCEEDINGS, [If the parties fail to agree upon an amicable settlement, either in whole or in part during the conciliation conference], the Arbiter or Executive Committee, AS THE CASE MAY BE shall issue an order directing the parties to simultaneously file within thirty (30) days their respective position papers, jointly verified by counsel and the parties, attaching thereto the affidavits of their witnesses and documentary evidence, as well as their draft decisions as provided for by Executive Order No. 26. (a)

Said position paper and draft decision shall state clearly and distinctly the facts, the issues and applicable laws and jurisprudence on which it is based. (a)

Section [3] 10. *Ocular inspection and/or clarificatory questions.* – [During the conference, and/or] [A]t any time before or after the case is submitted for resolution, the Arbiter may in his discretion, require an ocular inspection of the project or the site of the homeowners association, examination of the records of the owner or the developer, or the corporate records of the association, and the presentation of witnesses, solely for purposes of clarification or additional information on the evidence on record. (a)

Section [6] 11. *Summary resolution.* – With or without the position paper and draft decision, the Arbiter shall resolve the case on the basis of the pleadings and pertinent records of the case and of the Board."

RESOLVED FURTHER, AS IT IS HEREBY FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Chief Executive Officer be authorized to issue supplemental orders to establish the mechanisms for the implementation of these rules.

APPROVED, 26 February 2007, Pasay City.

THE HONORABLE NOLI L. DE CASTRO
Vice-President of the Philippines &
HUDCC Chairman

ERNESTO L. PINEDA
Undersecretary, DOJ

ROMULO Q.M. FABUL
Commissioner and
Chief Executive Officer

WENCELITO T. ANDANAR
Undersecretary, DILG

TERESITA A. DESIERTO
Commissioner

AUGUSTO B. SANTOS
Deputy Director-General, NEDA

JESUS YAP PANG
Commissioner

JOEL L. JACOB
DPWH

ARTURO M. DUBLADO
Commissioner

Attested by:

CHARITO B. LANSANG
Board Secretary

(PDI - March 30, 2007)

Young tennis ace thrives in trying conditions

By Marc Anthony Reyes

A RIPPED NET, PEELED-OFF SURFACE paint, a short baseline, and the constant chugging noise from passing commuter trains.

Playing conditions at the tennis court owned by the Metropolitan Sampaloc Lawn Tennis are far from ideal.

But 12-year-old Dheo Lagmay Talatayod doesn't mind.

With all its rugged features, Talatayod is forced to adjust and improvise his shotmaking. Accustomed to the noise, he learns to shut himself off from outside distractions and to focus on the match.

Since the baseline at the España side is only a meter from the wall, Talatayod has developed a deadly serve-and volley-game. So unlike other junior players who are keen on sharpening their skills from the baseline.

"The backstep was short so he has to hit the ball on the rise," explains his teacher-coach Felisa Rioflorido. "But somehow he has mastered it.'"

Indeed, Talatayod has a knack for hitting awkward shots with a minimum backswing, getting to the ball ahead to fluster even grown-ups who dare to challenge him.

MAKING DO: Dheo Talatayod slices a backhand at his decrepit home court in Sampaloc, Manila. INQUIRER PHOTO/ERIK ARAZAS

The tennis court simply doesn't meet ATP standards. A rusty chicken wire divides the court from the railroad station platform and it's not uncommon to find passengers ambling directly across the court in the middle of a match.

To strangers, the trains' noise may be unbearable. Not Talatayod.

"*Sanayan lang po* (I got used to it already)," said Talatayod, wiping off sweat after a few swings under the midday sun. He just came from a Mass for his coming graduation at the Legarda Elementary School. "After playing here, it becomes easier for me to play in other courts."

Sure enough, his skills come in handy. He topped the Selangor and Langkawi legs of the Malaysian age-group tour last year.

Over the weekend, he dominated the NCR Palaro with gold medals in singles and doubles events, in the process earning the Best Athlete award and getting scholarship offers from top schools.

Now, the Big City is resting its hopes on Talatayod's lean shoulders to snare victories in the Palarong Pambansa in Koronadal City in late April.

And Talatayod believes his expertise under trying conditions will serve him in good stead.

His love for his "home court" is understandable. His mother tends a small store next to it while his father drives a jeepney that plies the route near the train station.

And when the court isn't being used as a neighborhood clothesline, he and his two younger brothers, including 11-year-old Carlo, who is also Palaro-bound, also have the decrepit court for their playground.

Talatayod began playing the game as a six-year-old when he used to hammer the ball against the wall using a small piece of plywood. Later on, a regular player took pity and gave him an old racket.

Then he started to get into the basics with the help of the Mesalta members.

One of his coaches, Jovy Mamawal, cited his psyche. "He's playing against men with tattoos in that side of the city, he should play with edge and toughness."

But things are a lot simpler for Talatayod: "*Araw-araw po akong naglalaro ng tennis pero di po ako nagsasawa kahit mainit, kahit saan* (I play tennis everyday but I don't get tired of it even if it's under the sun. I can play anywhere)."

And that's where his real advantage lies: He thrives under trying conditions.

Ardina's 69 powers RP to team championship

THAILAND—DOTTIE ARDINA BIRDIED HER last two holes en route to a three-under par 69 yesterday, lifting the Philippines to the team championship while grabbing the individual lead in the Thailand Ladies Amateur Open Golf Championship at the President Country Club on Suwintawong Road here.

Ardina, who carded a 71 in the first round, started in the back nine and birdied Nos. 15 and 18 against a missed green bogey on the 14th. But the 13-year-old Junior World champion surged into the lead with that fiery birdie-birdie finish.

With Mia Piccio carding a 75, the ICTSI-backed RP squad shot a 144 in the three-to-play, two-to-count format event for a 36-hole total of 286.

The team pooled a 142 in the first day with Ardina and Cyna Rodriguez firing identical 71s. Rodriguez blew a one-under card after nine holes and didn't count with a 76.

Thailand, which led in the first round of the two-day team tourney with a 141, settled for runner-up honors with a 290 after a 149.

Ardina's superb round likewise netted her the lead in the individual competition, pooling a four-under par 140 for a one-stroke lead over compatriot Regina de Guzman, who matched par 72 for a 141.

Ainil Abubakar of Malaysia made a 73 for third with a 144.

Ardina could have pulled away from the pack had she made a couple of birdie putts as the spearhead of the RP team flashed a brilliant iron game, hitting close to the pin on at least eight occasions, according to national coach Bong Lopez.

ARDINA: So young, so brilliant.

FEU, UST lady booters clash for Ang Liga title

GAMES TOMORROW
(*PhilSports Field*)
2 p.m.—Nomads vs Sphere
4 p.m.—UST vs FEU

FAR EASTERN AND Santo Tomas, arguably the country's top two women's soccer teams today, contest the PFF-Ang Liga Pilipina football championship tomorrow at the PhilSports Field in Pasig City.

The two varsity arch rivals collide in the main game at 4 p.m. of the tournament serving as the Philippine National Women's Football Association's offering to celebrate Women's Month.

Sphere FC and Nomads dispute third place at 2 p.m.

Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose Cojuangco Jr., Philippine Football Federation executive vice president Nonong Araneta, football patron and Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando, Rep. Charlie Cojuangco, Negros Oriental Football Association head, and the PFF's Vince Santos have been invited to the simple awards rites following the title match of the Mizuno-sponsored event.

FEU, the reigning UAAP champion, and UST actually finished second and third with 9-1 and 9-2 records, respectively, behind Candidates (10-1) at the close of the two-round eliminations.

But since the Candidates, composed of national pool members, is a guest squad, both collegiate sides booked their spots in the championship game after more than five months of soccer action.

The FEU women of coach Malou Rubio enter the game with a huge psychological edge after dethroning two-time champion UST in the UAAP finals and then beating the same squad, 1-0, in the tournament just three weeks ago.

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60°
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a² + b² = c²
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Nets clobber Pacers; Mavs up winning run

CLEVELAND'S Drew Gooden loses the ball in the game against the New York Knicks. REUTERS

THE NEW JERSEY NETS SOLIDIfied their hold on a playoff spot in the Eastern Conference with a 118-94 win over the slumping Indiana Pacers on Wednesday.

The Nets moved into seventh place in the East standings by a half-game over Orlando, with New Jersey now two games clear of the Pacers and the New York Knicks for the final playoff spot.

Indiana's playoff hopes continue to fade having lost 16 of its last 18 games and 10 straight on the road.

"You are not going to beat a quality team doing that, especially on the road," Indiana coach Rick Carlisle told reporters.

"We have to be a lot better. We weren't. The result is obvious." Indiana was without its leading scorer Jermaine O'Neal, who missed the game with left ankle and knee sprains.

Rookie Josh Boone scored a career-high 22 points and had 10 rebounds for the Nets, who led by as many as 22 points in the second quarter before taking a 60-43 lead at the half.

New Jersey expanded that lead to 25 points after three quarters, with the Nets then bringing in their subs for most of the fourth quarter en route to their second straight win and third in as many games over the Pacers this season.

"Indiana played last night and was short-handed without their best player," Nets coach Lawrence Frank told reporters.

"We took advantage of a team being short-handed and that is encouraging." Bostjan Nachbar added 20 points before he fouled out with three minutes remaining. Richard Jefferson chipped in with 14 points and the Nets had six players in double figures.

Shawne Williams led Indiana with 19 points and Mike Dunleavy added 14.

The Dallas Mavericks won their 60th game of the season and eighth straight after rallying past the Milwaukee Bucks, 105-103. Dirk Nowitzki injured his ankle for the Mavericks and left the game, but the extent of his injury was not known.

Caron Butler returned from a knee injury to score 21 points and help the Washington Wizards end a three-game losing streak with a 111-108 win over the Philadelphia 76ers.

The Toronto Raptors moved into third spot in the Eastern Conference standings as Chris Bosh became the franchise leader in career double-doubles in a 96-83 win over the Miami Heat.

Bosh had 13 points and 17 rebounds.

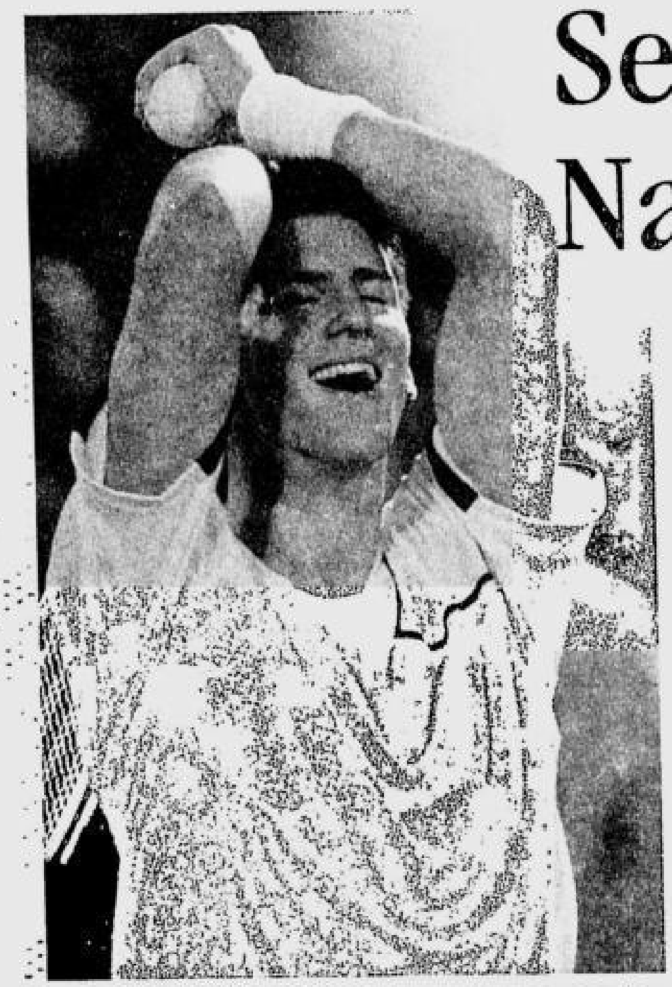
Tim Duncan scored 31 points, including his first 3-pointer of the season, as the San Antonio Spurs rallied past the New Orleans Hornets 92-88.

Reuters

NBA on TV today

10:30 a.m.—Phoenix vs Golden State (replays at 4 p.m. and 9:30 p.m.)

Serena stays on course; Nadal, Roddick tumble



NOVAK Djokovic celebrates after beating Rafael Nadal. REUTERS

MIAMI—SERENA WILLIAMS stayed on course for a fourth Sony Ericsson Open title with a ruthless 6-1 6-4 win over Czech Nicole Vaidisova in the quarter-finals on Wednesday.

The men's draw took a surprising turn for the second successive day, however, with second seed Rafael Nadal and number three Andy Roddick joining world number one Roger Federer on their way out of the tournament.

After losing to Nadal in last week's final at Indian Wells, Serb Novak Djokovic took quick revenge, shocking the Spaniard 6-3 6-4 to advance to the semi-finals without dropping set.

The 19-year-old Serbian will now meet Britain's Andy Murray, who reached the final four when Roddick was forced to retire with a hamstring injury trailing 5-3 in the first set.

After disposing of top seed Maria Sharapova in the fourth round, Williams made quick work of Vaidisova, overwhelming the 17-year-old in just 67 minutes to advance to the last four.

Playing her first tournament since lifting her eighth Grand Slam title at the Australian Open, Williams has gained form and confidence with every match, underlining her determination to return to the top of the world rankings.

Williams raced through the opening set but met resistance in the second when the eighth-seeded Vaidisova threatened to seize control, securing triple break point at 4-4.

But the young Czech failed to capitalise and Williams immediately made her pay, recording the decisive break to go up 5-4 and winning 13 of the final 14 points to close out the match.

Williams will next meet 14th seed Shahar Peer of Israel who booked her place in the final four with a 6-0 6-3 rout of Italy's Tathiana Garbin.

World number one Justine Henin of Belgium will take on Russian ninth seed Anna Chakvetadze in the other semi-final.

Murray, the 12th seed, was leading 4-3 when American Roddick called for a medical timeout to receive treatment in the locker-room.

The third seed returned to the court but was immediately broken. Roddick walked to the net to shake hands then informed the umpire he could not continue.

"I don't know what it is, I'm going to get an MRI, I think the medical term is, the bottom of my ass hurts," said Roddick, the 2004 Miami champion.

The 19-year-old Murray moved into the semis for the second straight Masters Series event having reached the last four at Indian Wells. Reuters

Cavs, Magic show wares in Shanghai

SHANGHAI, CHINA—THE CLEVELAND Cavaliers and the Orlando Magic are coming to China.

The NBA teams will face each other in preseason games on Oct. 17 and Oct. 20 in China, the NBA said in a news conference on Thursday. The first game will be played in Shanghai and the second will be in the former Portuguese territory of Macau.

Sandwiched between those games, the Magic will face the China national team on Oct. 18, also in Macau.

The preseason games will be the second for the NBA in China. In 2004, the Houston Rockets—led by Chinese center Yao Ming—and the Sacramento Kings played in Beijing and Shanghai.

The meeting between the Magic and the China national team will be historic.

It will be the second time an NBA team has faced China's top team on national soil. In 1979, the Washington Bullets—now the Wizards—played two games against the China national team.

AP

Sharapova to compete in Fed Cup

Debuts versus Spain

MOSCOW—WORLD NUMBER TWO MARIA Sharapova will make her long-awaited Fed Cup debut for Russia against Spain in next month's World Group first-round tie.

"It's all has been agreed and unless she is injured, we will see Maria in Moscow in April," Russia's tennis chief Shamil Tarpishchev, who is also their Fed Cup captain, told Reuters on Wednesday.

SHARAPOVA

Sharapova will be joined by world number three Svetlana Kuznetsova and world number seven Nadia Petrova for the two-day indoor tie at Moscow's Luzhniki Sports Palace from April 21 to 22.

Tarpishchev must choose between 11th-ranked Anna Chakvetadze and 14th-ranked Dinara Safina to replace Elena Dementieva, who has a rib injury.

"Aside from Dementieva, we'll have our strongest team there," said Tarpishchev.

There have always been doubts in the Russian media over whether Sharapova would ever play for her country, but the Florida-based 19-year-old made herself available shortly after winning last year's U.S. Open title.

Playing Fed Cup for Russia would make Sharapova eligible to play in next year's Bejing Olympics.

The Russians will try to regain the Fed Cup title they won in 2004 and 2005. They lost to Belgium in the quarter-finals last year.

Reuters

Thorpe pays tribute to Phelps for ripping his world record

THE PHILIPPINES' Jaclyn Marissa Pangilinan competes during the women's 200m breaststroke heat at the World Swimming Championships in Melbourne, Australia, Thursday. AP

MELBOURNE—IAN THORPE HAS paid tribute to American Michael Phelps for smashing his world record in the 200-meters freestyle at the world championships just four months after the Australian great's retirement.

Phelps seized Thorpe's six-year world mark with a scintillating one minute 43.86 seconds swim in the final on Tuesday.

Thorpe broke the 200m world record six times during his stellar career, which officially ended last November when he announced his retirement.

Thorpe was not at the pool to see Phelps break the record with prior speaking engagement away from Melbourne.

But the Athens Olympics 200m freestyle champion said he was surprised to hear the result, while being excited for Phelps and his camp.

"I was disappointed I didn't get to see the race," Thorpe told Thursday's The Australian newspaper.

"I was on a plane back from Adelaide after being with the Australian Olympic soccer team.

"Although I was surprised to hear the result, my heartfelt congratulations go out to Michael and his coach Bob Bowman.

"I look forward to congratulating him in person on my return to Melbourne later in the week." Thorpe said he hoped his best time would continue to fall down the list.

"I hope this time continues to drop in the future," he said.

Phelps's swim leaves just the 400m freestyle world record with Thorpe.

The American obliterated his world record in the 200m butterfly by 1.71 seconds on Wednesday to capture his third gold medal at the world championships.

AFP

Hansen pulls out of 200-m breaststroke

MELBOURNE—JAPAN'S KOSUKE KItajima will be looking to cash in on world champion Brendan Hansen's withdrawal from the 200-meter breaststroke heats at the world swimming championships Thursday.

Hansen, the world record holder in the event, pulled out with an illness leaving the way for Kitajima to reclaim the world title he lost to the American at the 2005 Montreal world titles.

US Swimming said Hansen fell ill on Wednesday evening after returning from the pool where he won silver in the 50m breaststroke final but he is expected to return for Sunday's 4x100m medley relay.

Kitajima, who lost the 100m breaststroke final narrowly to Hansen on Monday, went the fastest time of two minutes 11.07 seconds into the semi-finals Thursday ahead of Italians Loris Facci (2:12.07) and Paolo Bossini (2:12.20).

"I only heard about it (Hansen) when I arrived at the stadium this morning. It is unfortunate, the race is not going to be as exciting as I'd like it to be," said Kitajima.

AFP

Diego hospitalized against his will

MARADONA: Over-indulgence REUTERS

BUENOS AIRES—FOOTBALL legend Diego Maradona was hospitalized against his will in Buenos Aires after falling ill from over-indulging in food, alcohol and cigars, his personal doctor said Thursday.

The life of the 46-year-old former Barcelona and Napoli star was not in danger, doctor Alfredo Cahe told reporters, but Maradona will stay in a shared room Guemes Hospital where he was taken late Wednesday for "several days." Results of a medical examination will be ready later Thursday, he added.

"He didn't have a very consistent lifestyle, in his eating habits, his drinking and the amount of cigars he smoked," Cahe said, adding that "it was not cocaine."

This, in addition to stress, was a logical reason to hospitalize him, and against his will," Cahe said, adding that Maradona was not suffering heart or brain ailments.

In April 2000 Maradona had a heart attack in Uruguay following a cocaine overdose. Four years later, another heart attack followed another overdose. After spending weeks in intensive care, his weight ballooned to alarming levels, prompting him to undergo gastric bypass surgery in 2005.

Earlier, the hospital said the former Argentina star was taken by ambulance to the hospital "to undergo an examination after having suffered a decompensation," it said in a statement,

The hospital said, "it does not have any relation to the consumption of dangerous drugs." Maradona, who led Argentina to a 1986 World Cup title, fell ill at his parents' house, Argentine televison said.

AFP

Holy Cross spikers zero in on semis

By June Navarro

HOLY CROSS OF DAVAO COLLEGE planted a foot in the semifinals of the 2007 Nestea Beach Volley Mindanao eliminations after sweeping its four assignments yesterday at the La Salle Green Hills sandcourt.

Carren Desierto and Dolly Penaflorida touched off their winning run with a grueling 18-21, 25-23, 15-7 triumph over Lina Gampong and Mayeta Tan of Mindanao State University Tawi-Tawi before breezing past Ateneo de Davao and University of Mindanao-Davao.

Desierto and Penaflorida ended the day with another victory after squeezing past Liezl Manatad and Mylin Que of University of the Mindanao Tagum, 11-21, 21-13, 15-11, to clinch the top semifinal slot.

Desierto and Penaflorida step up their form a bit today when they try to hurdle their semifinal foes for a ticket to the national championships in Boracay Island.

"We hardly practiced before going here because we're too busy with school," said the 5-foot-10 Penaflorida, a BS Commerce and Management senior.

Seeking for a fourth appearance in Boracay, Penaflorida said they would fly to Davao first thing in the morning on Saturday and attend the school's graduation rites in the afternoon.

A defeat in the semifinals would push them back to the losers' bracket, putting Desierto and Penaflorida in danger of missing the island paradise finals on April 19-21, despite winding up with an unbeaten slate in the elimination round of the Mindanao qualifying.

Manatad and Que also started on the right track after whipping Ateneo's Lualhati and Mary Justin Pinili, 21-7, 21-6 and UMD's Maricel Cabus and Janice Arnaiz, 21-12, 21-13 before yielding to Desierto and Penaflorida.

Gampong and Tan atoned for an earlier loss by walloping the Pinili sisters, 21-16, 21-9 to keep themselves in contention for a seat in the national championships where three teams each from the men's and women's division of the Mindanao leg will qualify.

MSU Tawi-Tawi and Capitol University emerged as the heavy favorites in the men's division after scoring easy victories over Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College and Ateneo De Davao University, respectively.

Gabshar Tahiluddin and Yusop Abdulkarim of MSU Tawi-Tawi bombarded TTRAC's Jay-Ar Aping and Gabriel Usman with precise net attacks to win, 21-9, 21-11, while Capitol's Orpheus Cubillas and Kiven Escobal carved out an emphatic 21-9, 21-14 win over Ateneo.

Today's outcome will determine the teams that will make it to the Boracay finals. Six teams from Luzon and Visayas in the men's and women's division have already made it to the grand showdown.

JAY-AR Aping of Tawi-Tawi Regional Agricultural College tries to get to the ball. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

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Impressive Pacquiao hits peak form early

From page A29

And he did it in style.

Showing tremendous endurance, Pacquiao set a personal best of 38 minutes in covering Griffith Park, alternately jogging, sprinting and running. He normally covers the urban park on the eastern end of the Santa Monica Mountains in Los Angeles in 41 minutes, according to a report by GMA 7's Chino Trinidad.

At the Wild Card Gym, the Filipino ring superstar was even more impressive, drawing the attention of training supervisor Justin Fortune, Filipino Trainer Buboy Fernandez and physical therapist Jeff de Guzman.

"Pacman is in very good condition, he doesn't run out of steam," said De Guzman, who watched the boxing idol arrived at the gym at 11 p.m. and worked out for two-and-a-half hours.

Pacquiao, who will defend his WBC International super-featherweight title on April 14 against Mexican Jorge Solis at the Alamodome in San Antonio, Texas, was prevented from sparring after suffering a scratch in the left eyebrow.

De Guzman said Pacquiao did five rounds of shadowboxing, then hit the mitts for 10 rounds.

Pacquiao then hit the heavy bags for two rounds, and followed it up with five rounds on the double-end bag.

Fernandez then took charge as Pacquiao spent 10 minutes on the speedball, 10 minutes skipping the rope, and another four rounds of shadow-boxing to cool down, before doing a series of floor exercises.

"There's no problem with Manny, he gives it all when training," said Fernandez in Cebuano.

Sources at the Wild Card Gym have indicated that promoter Bob Arum wants Pacquiao, who is said to have hit peak form early, to fly to San Antonio, Texas, 10 days before the fight to help promote the fight, as well as bring Pacquiao to a game of the San Antonio Spurs.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor

Legaspi fires 63 as Riviera pulls away; Ictsi ahead

Group I: 463 ICSTI 1, 470 Riviera, 482 Aguinaldo, 487 Eagle Ridge, 489 Valley, 496 ICSTI 2, 532 Northwoods, 544 Valley

Group II: 502 Aguinaldo 3, 505 Riviera, 525 Valley, 530 La Salle, 589 Valley 2 595 Aguinaldo, 599 Northwoods 2, 623 Northwoods 4.

Group III: 427 Riviera 3, 517 Valley

MIA LEGASPI SHOWED WHY SHE IS the world champion in her division by shooting a nine-under-par 63 from the special tees as Riviera settled the issue in Division 3 with still one round left in the Jungolf Interclub tournament at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa, Batangas.

Legaspi, winner of the 7-8 years class in the Junior World last year, got solid support from Abby Arevalo (70) and Pauline del Rosario (72). Riviera posted a 205 for the day and a 36-hole total of 427, far ahead of Valley (258-517).

ICSTI, starring former world titlist Wolen Superal, turned the tables on Riviera and forged ahead by seven in Division 1 while another Riviera team stayed close to Aguinaldo in Division 2.

Superal carded a 73 and Sonny Villaber and JR Quiachon each had a 75 to give ICTSI a 223-463 in a big reversal against first round leader Riviera, who also drew a 73 from John Kier Abdon but saw its other bets struggle for 236.

Sidelights

World-class tennis action at the 18th Mitsubishi Lancer International Junior Tennis Championship

The top two seeds in the girls' singles division of the Mitsubishi Lancer International Junior Tennis Championship are playing their last year as juniors. Top seed Sacha Jones of New Zealand and second seed Elena Chernyakova of Russia are expected to cement their names in the juniors record books as they both vie for a title this year.

Sacha, born in Auckland on Aug. 11, 1990, started playing tennis at the age of five, and is coached by her parents Sue and Chris Lewis. She loves going out with her friends to watch sporting events.

She is also actively campaigning in the women's circuit where she is ranked 770th. She has played a total of 16 singles matches and has won a total of 8. Ranked 11th in the juniors, Sacha has lost only 33 of her 80 singles matches.

Born on October 19, 1990 in Moscow, Elena started playing at the age of six, and is currently coached by Sviatoslav Petrovich Mirza. She loves music, playing with computers and snowboarding. She's currently ranked 17th in the juniors and only has a few stints in the women's circuit.

Final matches will be aired on Solar Sports, April 8, 5:00pm – 7:00pm.
Replay on April 14, 10:00am -12:00pm

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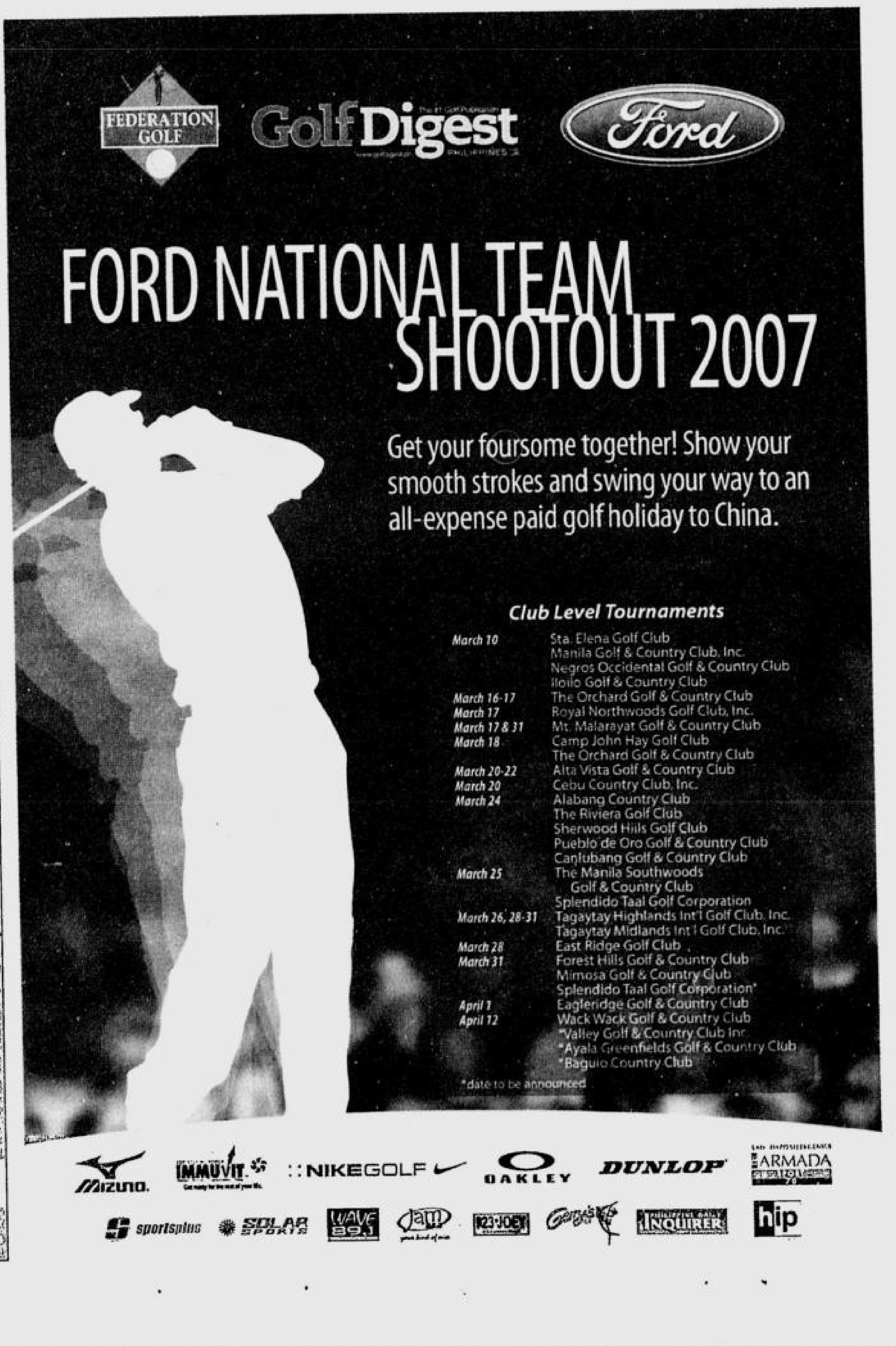

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March 17 & 31 Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club
March 18 Camp John Hay Golf Club
The Orchard Golf & Country Club
March 20-22 Alta Vista Golf & Country Club
March 20 Cebu Country Club, Inc.
March 24 Alabang Country Club
The Riviera Golf Club
Sherwood Hills Golf Club
Pueblo de Oro Golf & Country Club
Canlubang Golf & Country Club
March 25 The Manila Southwoods Golf & Country Club
Splendido Taal Golf Corporation
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Meralco income hit P13B in '06 /B4
Mindanao gets $83-M World Bank loan /B6

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Gov't to bid out FTI complex this year

Equity stakes in Meralco, SMC to be sold too

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE GOVERNMENT WILL SELL ALL OR PART OF THE 120-hectare agro-industrial complex of Food Terminal Inc. in Taguig City this year as part of its privatization program.

"I was just advised by the privatization office yesterday that we can pursue this this year in addition to (the sale of shares in) San Miguel Corp. and Meralco (Manila Electric Co.)," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves told reporters yesterday.

FTI, a subsidiary of the state-owned National Food Corp., provides prime industrial and commercial site for medium to long term leases; industrial buildings for offices or small-scale processing operations and complete food stor-

GOV'T/ B4

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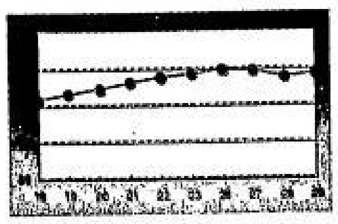

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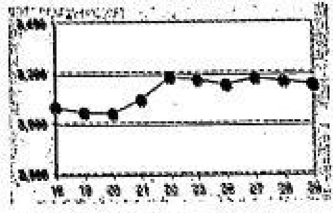
STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

Shares close lower

SHARE PRICES CLOSED 0.35-PERCENT lower yesterday as they tracked Wall Street's overnight weaker performance, dealers said.

The composite index fell 11.09 points to 3,151.72 after moving between 3,136.33 and 3,162.81.

The broader all-share index fell 6.34 points to 2,016.98.

There were 52 decliners and 32 advancers with 66 stocks unchanged. Turnover totaled 3.06 billion shares worth P4.4 billion.

"The downtick in New York weighed on investor sentiment," said Jasper Jimenez, a broker at BDO Securities Corp.

Stocks fell overnight on Wall Street on renewed inflation worries compounded by a spike in oil prices amid tensions in the Middle East.

Dealers said investors here also avoided taking long positions ahead of the five-day Easter break from Thursday next week.

"There is not much activity so turnover is low. It looks like this (sluggishness) will prevail till after the Holy Week, unless something more positive comes up," Jimenez said.

Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. was the most actively traded stock, falling P5.50 to P27.50.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was unchanged at P2,500. *AFP*

Gov't to decide on MRT3 buyout by August

THE GOVERNMENT WILL DECIDE BY August this year on whether to buy out the build-lease-transfer (BLT) contract on the Metro Railway Transit 3, which will otherwise cost about $2 billion if paid on a staggered basis from now until the long-term contract lapses in 2025.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves yesterday told reporters the government was studying its options on how to address its liabilities to MRT3's Japanese operator, Tespi Corp., a subcontractor of Sumimoto Corp.

"We're faced with some deadlines because we have to decide on this by August this year. For example, (we'll see) if we can do a refinancing scheme. We're looking at it," Teves said.

Finance Undersecretary John Sevilla explained that the proposed refinancing would cover the equity payments owed to Tespi, not just those which had fallen past due but also the payments committed for the future.

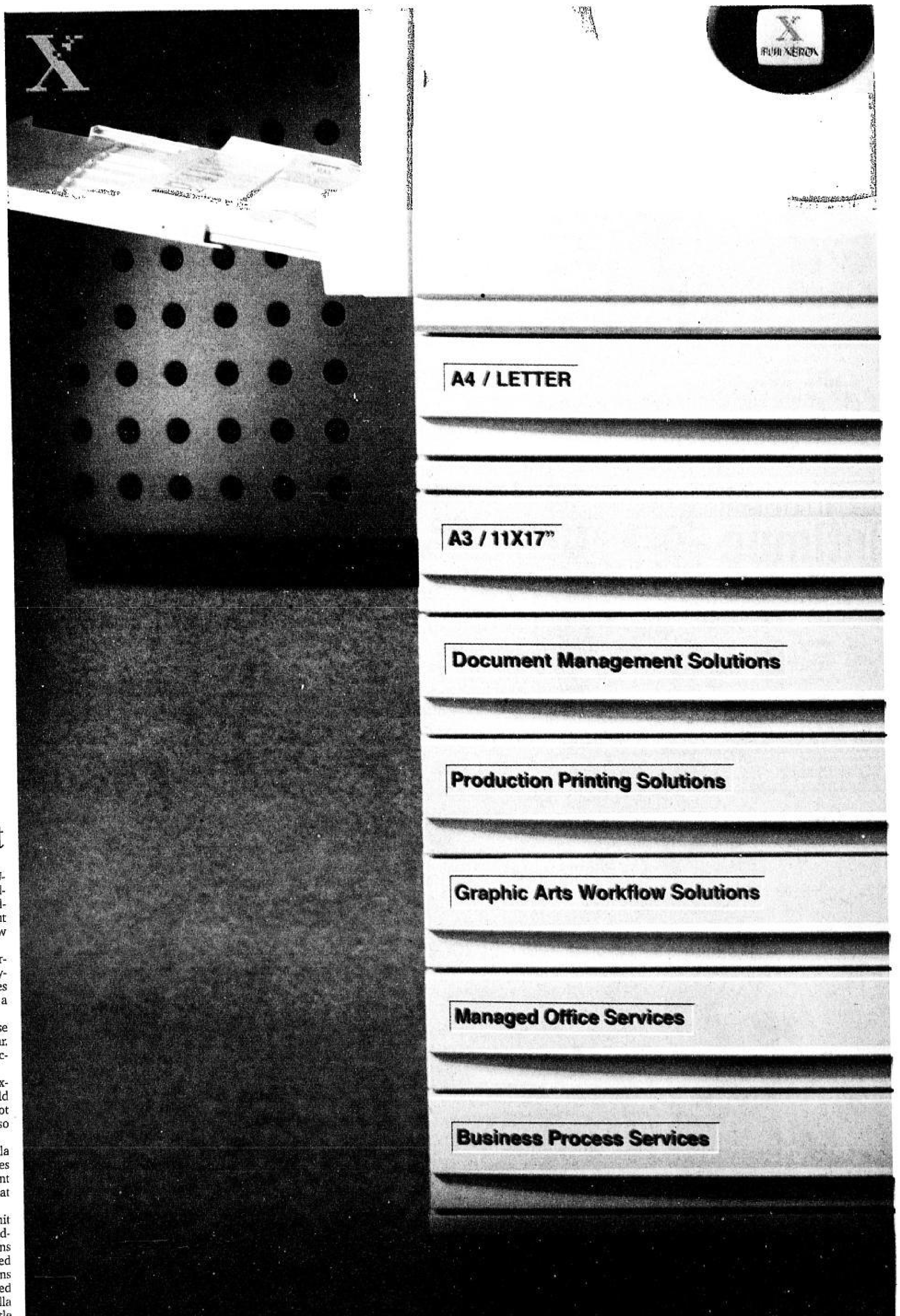
Under the existing MRT3 contract, Sevilla estimated that the government's arrearages in the form of its committed equity payment stream to the Japanese contractor stood at about $30 million to $40 million.

As the government has committed to remit equity payments until 2025, it is now considering whether to settle its future obligations but at a lower price since this would be based on the net present value of money. This means that instead of paying $2 billion as scheduled until the BLT contract lapses in 2025, Sevilla said the government had the option to settle the committed payments earlier than this.

He noted that if the government would buy out the contract now, it would not have to spend $2 billion until 2025. Under the contract, the government has committed a 15-percent return on equity on the MRT3 project.

But Sevilla said the government was only looking at settling ahead of schedule equity payments committed but not the cost of maintaining the railway. The government recently thought of taking over the MRT3 consortium in order to save on future costs, especially

GOV'T/ B4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Ascott to bring in new brand of serviced hotels

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

THE ASCOTT GROUP OF SINGAPORE plans to bring to the Philippines a new brand of apartment hotels after purchasing the former "Oakwood Premier" hotel in Makati City for $54 million.

Following the launch yesterday of "Ascott Makati," formerly known as Oakwood Premier, Ascott country general manager Arthur Gindap said that the group was looking to bring in the Ascott group's "Citadines" brand, which caters to young urban professionals.

Gindap said Ascott was looking at several locations to set up Citadines projects, such as Cebu, Bacolod and Iloilo in the provinces and the Ortigas Center in Pasig City and Fort Bonifacio Global City in Taguig City.

The Ascott Group is the largest international serviced residence owner-operator outside the United States, with about 18,500 units in key cities of Asia Pacific, Europe and the Gulf region.

Its portfolio now includes more than 130 properties in over 40 cities across 21 countries worldwide.

The Ascott Group has been serving the needs of business leaders, management executives, and their families as well as young independent travelers with its three brands Ascott, Somerset and Citadines.

Ascott officials said the group would renovate Ascott Makati's more than 300 rooms, which will mean a change in interior design and installation of Internet devices.

Ascott expects the renovation to cost about $15,000 a room.

Ascott Makati enjoys an occupancy rate of roughly 90 percent.

The Ascott Makati caters more to the high-end market, with each guest attended to with personalized service.

The spacious apartments are well appointed, with a fitness center, swimming pool and an all-day dining facility.

Ascott Makati is located above the Glorietta mall, providing easy access to shops, restaurants and supermarkets.

The rooms have a a fully equipped kitchen, a dining area, washing machine and dryer, king and queen size beds in the rooms, television, stereo system and a safety deposit box.

The Somerset service apartments in the Philippines, on the other hand, caters to the business class, and is present in three locations in the Makati area.

The Somerset properties have an average size of 150 rooms and enjoy an occupancy level of 80 percent.

ASCOTT COMES TO RP
Ascott country general manager Arthur Gindap (2nd row, center) with key members of the Ascott Makati staff

The cart before the horse

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

COMMENTARY

IN AN OFFICIAL RELEASE LAST MARCH 28, 2007, Arsenio Tanchuling, executive director of Tambuyog Development Center, said, "The government has put the cart before the horse." Two other instances when this happened were discussed by Alyansa Agrikultura farmers and fisherfolk leaders this past month.

Agricultural Importation

Objecting to the process applied for vannamae importation, Tanchuling said, "The government has allowed importation of vannamae species since 2005. They then allowed accredited local shrimp farms to grow and propagate these species locally in 2006. But it was only in January 2007 that the government provided for a set of bio-security protocols through Fisheries Administrative Order 225 and 225-1."

The bio-safety protocols should have been done first to protect the local shrimp industry. This is because the contamination from vannamae not pathogen free can quickly spread throughout the local shrimp industry, which is only now recovering from shrimp diseases that had plagued it since the late 1990s.

Other farmer leaders said that some agricultural products are even now being imported without the required phytosanitary inspections done in the exporting country. Their hope is that this practice be stopped, specially with our new Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with other countries. The case of China was cited, where potential opportunities may be destroyed if we do not follow the right procedure.

Trade Liberalization

Last March 23, former Neda Deputy Director General Ponciano Intal summarized his research findings in a seminar on "Further Trade Liberalization in line with WTO Negotiations." He said, "Deterioration in the Philippine's agriculture trade position and the rapid liberalization of imports in particular has adverse effects on the local small farmers." Upon deeper analysis by the seminar participants, it was concluded that it was our government more than the World Trade Organization, that caused this rapid liberalization.

Consider the table below.

WTO bound rates are the maximum levels allowed by WTO. The applied rates are the actual tariffs implemented by the country.

While Thailand and the Philippines have practically the same WTO bound rates, Thailand has chosen to implement applied rates much closer to their bound rates as compared to the Philippines. This is even if Thailand provides much more government support to their industries and agriculture than the Philippines. If we used the added protection allowed by WTO wherever needed, we would be in much better shape.

Mario Sereno, industry expert and Alyansa Agrikultura resource person, said, "It is sad that the government provides so little protection to Philippine industry. But it is even sadder that there is even less protection for Philippine agriculture, where the majority of our poor are located."

This again is a case of putting the cart before the horse. We should follow the model of Thailand by providing the appropriate government support and competitive mechanisms first, before further liberalizing imports. Instead we have unilaterally allowed ourselves to lose precious jobs. We should prevent this from happening again not only in WTO, but also in our bilateral trade negotiations, and most importantly, in our own national tariff decisions.

Resource Allocation

In the past, we have spent the great bulk of our irrigation budget on National Irrigation Systems (NIS). In his book, "Averting the Water Crisis in Agriculture," former UPLB Chancellor Wilfredo David stated that irrigating a hectare using NIS costs between P200,000 and P600,000. But using shallow tube wells which provide the same amount of water as NIS costs only P25,000. Yet in 2003, the P3.7 billion allocated to NIS was more than seven times the P0.5 billion given to shallow tube wells.

The ROI should be determined first before the distribution of scarce funds is made.

In our interview with the National Irrigation Administration officials in preparation for the World Water Day last week, we found out that this is currently being corrected. In this year's budget, irrigation rehabilitation, which costs only 1/10 of new NIS irrigation systems for the same amount of water, has now a much bigger share of the funding than before.

Conclusion

In the future, it is hoped that the steps for planning and implementation be first laid out and reviewed. Then the horse can be placed before the cart, and not vice versa.

In the above three cases, it would be phytosanitary measures in place before import arrivals, appropriate government support and competitive mechanisms before tariff reductions, and ROI analysis before government resource allocation decisions. This simple procedure, aided by transparency to the public, can help greatly in overcoming unscrupulous political and financial pressures. More attention to this area will significantly redound to the benefit of our people.

(The author is Agriwatch chair; former Cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects and former undersecretary of agriculture and trade and industry. For inquiries and suggestions, e-mail agriwatchphil@yahoo.com or telefax (02) 8522112)

AVERAGE TARIFF RATES

	WTO BOUND	APPLIED	DIFFERENCE Unused Protection
INDUSTRY			
Thailand	24%	14%	10%
Philippines	23%	4%	19%
AGRICULTURE			
Thailand	36%	29%	7%
Philippines	35%	8%	27%

Farmers urged to sell directly to consumers

By Amy R. Remo

FARMERS NEED TO FIND WAYS TO SELL DIRECTLY to consumers for them to boost their income and cut the prices of basic commodities, according to the Department of Agriculture.

Ricardo Cachuela, executive director of the Bureau of Post Harvest Research and Extension, said in a statement that helping farmers bring their produce closer to the market remained one of the priorities of the DA, as this would help cut through unnecessary trading layers that eat up most of the farmers' profit.

"Providing subsidies for farmers to help boost productivity is also among the priorities of the DA," Cachuela said. "But we cannot just ask our farmers to produce more without helping them find outlets where they can sell their products."

Cachuela issued the statement in response to the observation made by Benguet Gov. Borromeo Melchor that Benguet farmers needed subsidy, instead of new market outlets for their products, to enable them to become globally competitive.

In the case of Benguet farmers, Cachuela noted that in response to the request of the provincial government, the DA had provided farmers with four cold storage facilities and four units of refrigerated trucks to help them transport produce to Metro Manila.

The DA had also established the Huwarang Palengke (Model Markets) scheme several years back to enable vegetable growers to sell their produce by making them direct sellers.

By expanding access to retail markets, the department is able to provide "permanent assistance" to farmers, which would be more beneficial to them over the long term, added Arnel Apaga, director of the Training and Extension department of BPHRE, in an interview.

A P70-million infrastructure program for Benguet is now in the pipeline, which includes rehabilitating major roads such as the Tublay-Kapangan-Kibungan road.

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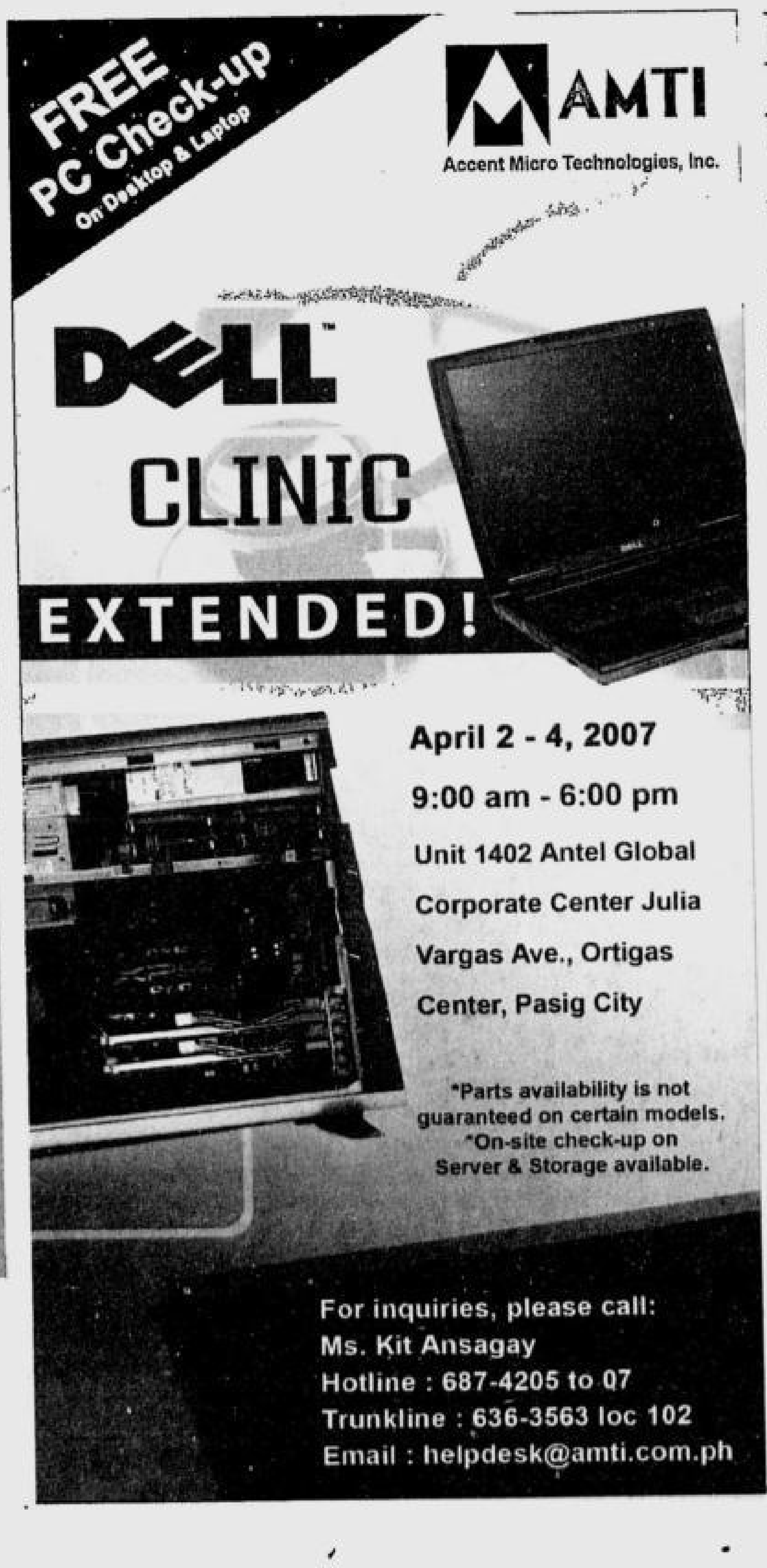

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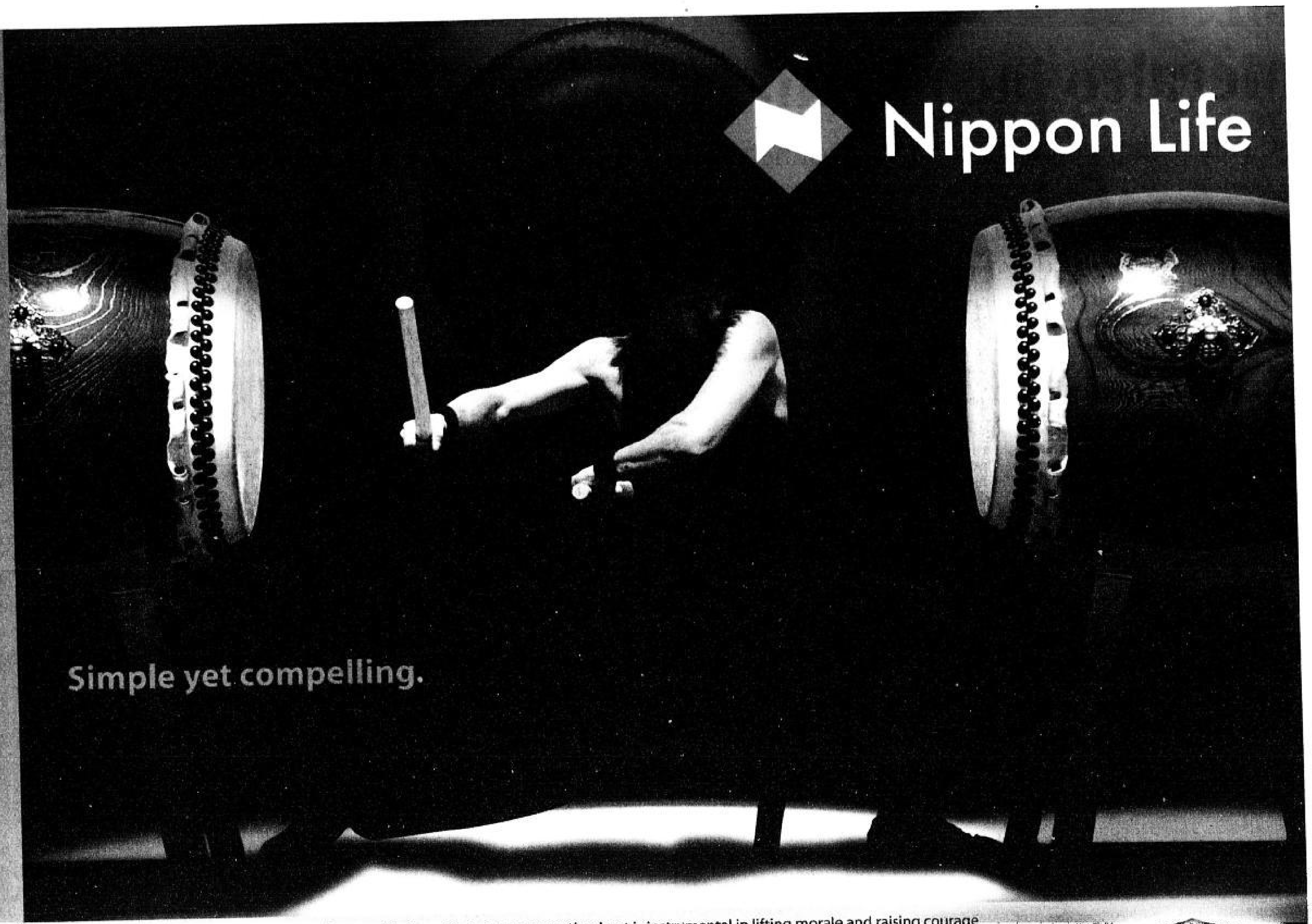

The unassuming taiko. Literally meaning "great wide drum", its intense resonating beat is instrumental in lifting morale and raising courage during turbulent times.

Much like Nippon Life, now on its 10th year in the Philippines. We continue to provide all our policyholders with financial strength and peace of mind.

Our mother company, Nippon Life Japan, the world's largest mutual life insurance company* with over USD 430 billion in assets, has been the symbol of reliability and stability trusted the world over. In the Philippines, count on us as we renew our promise to secure the lives of Filipino families not just today, but in the years to come.

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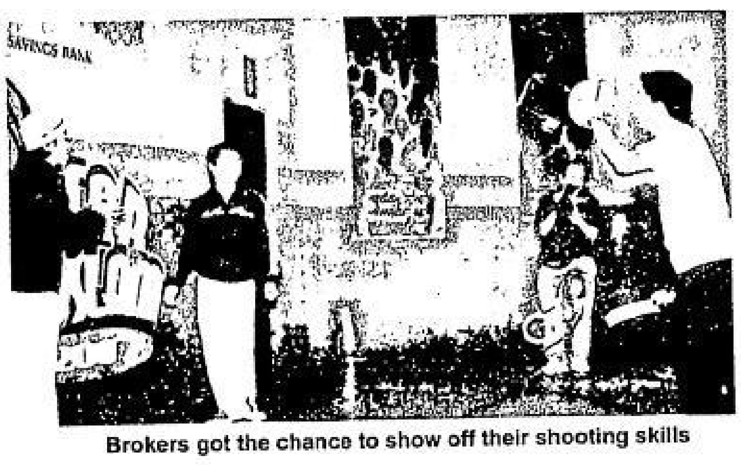
STRONG FOR YOU @ 10


Brokers got the chance to show off their shooting skills

BPIFSB's AVP Ruel Magtoto, VP Celyn Sta. Ana, Pres. Alfonso Salcedo Jr., and SVP Nita Claravall present Josephine Gaston, Carol Untalan, and Jeanne Red as the Top 3 Brokers of 2006

BPI Family Brokers Circle hits a Grand Slam

When it comes to giving its business partners a chance to show off their winning moves, BPI Family Savings Bank pulls out all the stops. Just recently, BPI Family Savings Bank (BPIFSB) celebrated another very good year with its valued broker partners and at the same time announced the mechanics of its annual rewards program, the Brokers Circle All Star Grandslam, at the Manila Polo Club. The event, which was hosted by BPI Family's Chito Yacapin and the fabulous Giselle Sanchez, aimed to reward brokers whose housing loan referrals were successfully booked.

It was truly a night to remember as BPIFSB raffled off prizes and awarded its Top Brokers of the Year as well as Top Q4 Performers. For the first time, the bank rewarded its top marketing assistants. BPI Family Savings Bank president Alfonso Salcedo led the upbeat event, together with BPI SVP Nita Claravall and BPIFSB VP Celyn Sta. Ana. Special guest pop star Erik Santos sent temperatures soaring with renditions of his hits "This Is The Moment" and "I Believe I Can Fly". Fellow performers included the Whiplash Dancers, the Buganda Band, and the Adamson Pep Squad. Indeed, with the high-energy level of the event, it was no wonder BPI Family's brokers came out feeling more inspired to go for the gold this year.

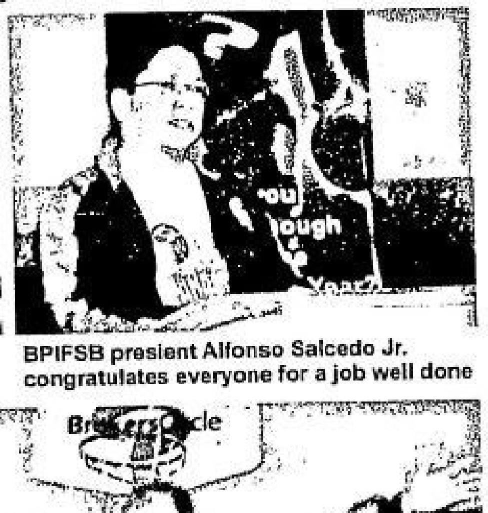
BPIFSB VP Celyn Sta. Ana commends the team for their success

Top broker Carl Dy shares a light moment with Giselle Sanchez

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
ALL STAR GRANDSLAM
Balladeer Erik Santos was the night's special guest

BPIFSB president Alfonso Salcedo Jr. mingles with his broker guests

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK
BPIFSB AVP Ruel Magtoto draws the winning raffle coupon


BPIFSB presient Alfonso Salcedo Jr. congratulates everyone for a job well done

Top 4th to 8th Brokers of 2006 with BPIFSB officers (from left): AVP Ruel Magtoto, VP Celyn Sta. Ana, Pres. Alfonso Salcedo Jr., Carl Dy, Lita Valdez, Melvin Famatigan, Suzy Atayde, Minda Tuazon, and SVP Nita Claravall

BrokersCircle
Host Giselle Sanchez dances with broker Danny Uson

Meralco income hit ₱13B in '06

SC ruling allowed power utility to post hefty profit

By Abigail L. Ho

AFTER SUFFERING SEVERAL quarters of losses, the Lopez-led Manila Electric Co. registered a net income of P13.88 billion in 2006, following the Supreme Court's reversal of an unfavorable Court of Appeals decision on the unbundling of the company's rates.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, the distribution utility attributed its profit surge to the write-back of all accumulated provisions for probable losses that it had been making since 2004, totaling P10.22 billion, net of tax.

Without the write-back, Meralco's net income for 2006 would have just been P3.66 billion.

Last year, the company suffered a net loss of P1.51 billion. With the provisions for probable losses, Meralco should have posted a net income of P3.33 billion.

"There are two immediate effects of the favorable SC decision on the company: First, there is no more threat of a huge potential amount of refund of P22 billion; second, there is no need to set aside some P6 billion in provisions annually," Meralco said. "With this, the positive impact on prospective profits would also be significant."

The high tribunal had earlier upheld a Court of Appeals decision nullifying the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the power distributor's unbundled rates.

The appeals court ruling also effectively nullified the ERC-approved rate hike of 17 centavos per kilowatt-hour (kWh).

Meralco had said that every month until the issuance of the final decision, it would be providing at least P500 million, exclusive of the 32-percent tax shield, for losses that an unfavorable decision could bring.

But in December last year, the Supreme Court overturned the Court of Appeals decision and, instead, ordered the ERC to call for an audit of Meralco's books by the Commission on Audit, to determine whether or not the rate hike was justified.

The company's revenues rose 9.5 percent in 2006 to P190.79 billion from P174.27 billion in 2005.

Meralco attributed this to its 1.1-percent sales growth, to 25,077 gigawatt-hours (GWh) as well as to the increase in its purchased power cost.

Energy sales was driven by the commercial sector, which registered a growth of 4 percent, followed by the industrial sector with 1.2 percent.

Commercial sales, which rose to 9,454.6 (GWh), was fueled by retail trade (13.9-percent growth), transport, storage and communication (10.9 percent) and real estate (6.3 percent).

Teaching a head-turning trade

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

AN HBC beauty expert shares a trick or two of her trade with her eager students.

HBC INC., WHICH OPERATES the HBC Home of Beauty Exclusives stores, is in the business of making people look and feel beautiful.

And starting November last year, HBC has also made it its business to help homemakers, budding entrepreneurs, and even students earn money from providing salon services through its HBC Exclusive Academe.

The HBC Exclusive Academe, which started operations at the HBC Hidalgo branch in Manila, offers courses in facial, basic and advanced coloring, hair rebonding, foot spa, pedicure, manicure and make-up.

All interested students have to buy is a training kit worth between P1,000 and P2,000, depending on the preferred course.

The kit goes to the purchase of materials that the students will use in the course of their lessons.

Edgar Allan L. Caper, HBC retail store brand manager, said in an interview that the HBC Exclusive Academe was supposed to give interested people an alternative source of income using HBC products.

Caper said the lessons are given by professionals in the field, and students can immediately earn from their skills once they complete the course.

"We want to be able to help those who have time on their hands and are interested in going into the salon business," he said.

He added some have gone on to put up their own salons, while others provide home services. There are also those who just use their skills at home, saving themselves the expense of going to professionals.

There are business opportunities in the salon industry because it is huge in the Philippines. This is due to the large, young population constantly in need of pampering and care.

The Hidalgo branch was the first to have an HBC Exclusive Academe because the HBC group owns the building.

The first floor is dedicated to retail operations while the second floor was converted into a classroom where lessons are held.

Caper said HBC plans to have an HBC Exclusive Academe in more stores nationwide as part of its mission to provide livelihood opportunities, especially in the provinces.

CORPORATE CITIZEN

HBC burst into the retail scene 10 years ago. It now has about 90 stores nationwide, with the most recent stores put up in Pavillon Mall-Laguna, Gaisano-Iloilo and Gaisano-Bacolod.

As a service to its customers, it employs a resident dermatologist who goes around the branches to give customers free consultations on skin care. Experts are also on hand on the shop floor to provide tips on proper hair care, grooming and salon operations.

Caper said it was HBC's vision to come up with affordable skin care products to cater to the low and middle-income markets, while being true to its legacy of helping the salon industry, especially the small ones operating within neighborhoods.

HBC has a soft heart for the salon industry because it traces its beginnings to the Hortaleza Vaciador chain, which grew because of the loyalty of neighborhood salons.

Sister company Splash Corp., provides a similar service through its "Ganda Mo, Hanapbuhay Ko" livelihood program, which was hatched in 1997 to help underprivileged women earn extra by taking up a basic cosmetology course.

The free course provided by Splash Foundation is broken down into six half-day sessions, covering lectures on techniques and hands-on training in hair cutting, coloring, hot oil treatment, manicure, pedicure and foot spa.

At the end of the training program, participants are given a certificate and a starter kit to encourage them to provide home services for a fee.

This fulfills Splash's vision to promote self-reliance, productivity and entrepreneurship through income-generating programs.

Splash said that since the program started in 1997—the same year the foundation was organized—over 4,000 women have completed the course.

Eight of 10 graduates now earn from home services. About 10 percent are employed by big salons here and abroad, while others have put up their own firms.

It is HBC Corp.'s mission to reach out to as many people as it can when it deploys its Exclusive Academe throughout the country.

Strong peso still hurting Japan firms

By Ronnel W. Domingo

JAPANESE FIRMS OPERATING IN the country are still smarting from the impact on their businesses of the appreciation of the peso against the US dollar, but confidence in the local market is expected to return to neutral in the months ahead after four months of negative ratings.

According to a monthly survey of the Japan External Trade Organization, the March rating improved to -7.6 points from -13.7 in February.

The survey aims to provide up-to-date information on business conditions in the Asian economy to help companies develop more effective business strategies.

The ratings measure year-on-year changes in business outlooks.

This month's poll included an additional question on whether there had been an impact on current business sentiment and outlook from the appreciation of local currencies.

"Looking by country and region, the percentages of companies responding 'Yes, we do notice an impact', and 'Yes, we most likely will notice an impact in two to three months,' were relatively high for the Philippines," Jetro said.

Of the 185 respondents in the Philippines, 62.7 percent said "Yes, we do," and 64.9 percent said "Yes, we most likely will."

Overall sentiment for the rest of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations improved slightly, but still rated in the negative at -6.1, reflecting slow overseas demand for electric and electronic equipment.

In '07, BPI sees profit up to 12%

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANK OF THE PHILIPPINE Islands expects its net profits to rise by 10 to 12 percent this year over the record-high P9 billion in net earnings it chalked up last year despite shrinking interest margins.

In a press briefing after BPI's annual stockholders meeting yesterday, bank president Aurelio Montinola III also said the bank would unload P5 to P6 billion worth of soured loans and foreclosed properties this year as part of efforts to boost asset quality.

In the first half of the year, he said the bank would likely rely more on non-interest earnings.

"In the first quarter, there will be good treasury gains," Montinola said.

But after the May elections, he said, growth in lending activity would likely pick up. For the whole year, BPI expects its loan portfolio to expand by 8 to 10 percent, driven by lending to consumers or households, as well as small and medium enterprises.

As interest rates narrowed in recent months, Montinola said the bank's interest margins would likely fall by about 25 basis points this year. But he said an increase in earnings assets would hopefully compensate for this reduction in margins.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 29, 2007)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	10.25	10.5	10.25	10.5	40,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	58.5	59	58	59	322,200
Bank of the Phil. Islands	65	65	64	64.5	904,000
China Banking Corp.	860	860	860	860	940
Citystate Savings Bank	20	20	20	20	300
Export and Ind. Bank A	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.52	2,820,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	102	103	101	102	106,360
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	60	61	59.5	60.5	950,600
Philippine National Bank	46.5	46.5	46.5	46.5	800
Phil. Savings Bank	62	62	62	62	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	29	29	27	27.5	48,539,400
Security Bank Corp.	78	78	77.5	77.5	132,700
Union Bank of the Phil.	58.5	58.5	58	58	2,000
OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
ATR Kimeng Fin. Corp.	3	3	3	3	35,000
Bankard Inc.	0.66	0.75	0.66	0.68	50,000
Citiseconline.Com Inc.	7	7	6.9	6.9	14,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	6	6	6	6	8,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	37.5	38	37.5	38	11,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.04	2.04	2.04	2.04	1,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	650	650	650	650	380
Sun Life Financial Inc.	2140	2140	2140	2140	470
Ivantage Corp.	1.56	1.56	1.5	1.54	343,000
ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
PNOC Energy Dev. Corp.	5.9	6.1	5.9	6	11,212,000
First Gen Corp.	55.5	56	55.5	56	1,448,600
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	70	70	69.5	70	409,100
Manila Electric Co. A	69.5	69.5	68.5	69	62,400
Manila Electric Co. B	70	70	69	69.5	348,400
Manila Water Co. Inc.	9.6	9.7	9.5	9.7	4,803,000
Petron Corp.	4.5	4.6	4.5	4.6	4,422,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	1,030,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.44	1.44	1.44	1.44	5,000
FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.85	3.85	35,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	24.75	25	24.75	25	12,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	54	54	53.5	53.5	397,300
Roxas Holdings, Inc.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2,000
San Miguel Corp. A	63.5	64.5	63.5	64.5	37,500
San Miguel Corp. B	71	71.5	71	71.5	127,500
Alliance Tuna Int'l. Inc.	2.28	2.28	2.2	2.22	1,147,000
Universal Robina Corp.	17	17	17	17	459,000
CONSTRUCTION, INFRASTRUCTURE & ALLIED SERVICES					
Southeast Asian Cement	1.7	1.72	1.7	1.72	1,620,000
Engineering Equip. Inc.	4.45	4.5	4.45	4.5	200,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.7	8.8	8.7	8.8	582,000
Phil Nat'l Const. Corp.	5	5.7	5	5.7	3,000
Republic Cement Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	7,000
CHEMICALS					
Chemrez Technologies Inc.	5	5.1	5	5	1,285,000
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.73	0.73	0.73	0.73	10,000
DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
Picop Resources Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.32	0.32	12,890,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.014	0.014	0.014	0.014	504,900,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.014	0.015	0.014	0.015	1,200,000
Ayala Corp.	540	550	540	545	550,660
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.89	0.89	0.88	0.88	340,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	8.2	8.2	8	8.1	2,154,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.6	6.7	6.5	6.7	1,349,000
AJO.Net Holdings Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	8,600,000
A. Soriano Corp.	3.4	3.55	3.35	3.55	367,000
APC Group Inc.	0.39	0.41	0.39	0.41	23,370,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.012	26,700,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	1.64	1.7	1.62	1.7	11,628,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	3.8	3.8	3.5	3.65	140,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	3.25	3.3	3.2	3.25	14,028,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.3	7.2	7.3	695,000
F&J Prince Holdings Corp.	1.18	1.2	1.18	1.2	2,082,000
House of Investments Inc.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	20,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.5	12.5	109,300
Keppel Holdings	1.9	2.02	1.9	2.02	98,000
Keppel Holdings B	1.96	2.06	1.96	2.06	240,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	150,000
Magnum Holdings, Inc.	9	9.5	9	9.2	255,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	2.3	2.55	2.3	2.5	12,793,000
Prime Orion Phils., Inc.	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.31	4,740,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	1,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.37	0.39	0.37	0.37	49,400,000
SM Investments Corp.	347.5	350	345	350	204,320
South China Resources Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.12	123,000
Unioil Res. & Holdings Co	0.26	0.28	0.25	0.28	2,340,000
Vivant Corp.	1.06	1.06	1.06	1.06	10,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.195	0.2	140,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	16	16.25	16	16.25	10,338,200
Belle Corp.	1.4	1.42	1.38	1.42	7,441,000
A. Brown Co. Inc.	1.38	1.42	1.38	1.42	1,043,000
Cityland Development Corp.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	27,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.48	0.48	0.48	0.48	400,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.95	547,000
C&P Homes Inc.	2.46	2.46	2.44	2.46	906,000
Cebu Prop. Vent. A	1.68	1.68	1.68	1.68	259,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.42	0.44	0.41	0.43	13,740,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.74	0.74	0.74	0.74	3,130,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.78	1.78	1.78	5,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.14	0.14	0.13	0.135	18,050,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.66	1.68	1.66	1.66	27,064,000
Interport Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	3,500,000
Interport Res. B	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	3,000,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.46	0.47	0.46	0.47	3,720,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.79	0.8	0.79	0.79	970,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. A	0.024	0.024	0.024	0.024	1,000,000
Megaworld Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.2	177,229,000
Metro Pacific Inv. Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.3	4.3	2,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.81	5,240,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	20,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.46	2.46	2.46	2.46	5,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	20	20.5	19.75	20	2,491,400
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.6	0.6	0.59	0.59	3,500,000
SM Development Corp.	3.7	3.7	3.7	3.7	230,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	11	11	11	11	2,886,100
Suntrust Home Dev. Inc.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	260,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.2	0.2	21,120,000
MEDIA					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	24.5	25	24.5	25	46,400
TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.66	1.68	707,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1225	1230	1200	1225	51,340
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	6.7	6.8	6.7	6.7	440,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	2500	2500	2495	2500	187,950
INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.245	0.25	200,000
Diversified Fin. Network	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.95	90,000
Imperial Res.	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	5,300,000
IPVG Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.6	178,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.06	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	400,000
Transpacific Broadband	2.1	2.12	2.08	2.1	184,000
Philweb Corp.	0.045	0.046	0.045	0.045	69,200,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	100,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	27	27	26.5	27	1,351,100
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	1.16	1.18	1.16	1.18	608,000
HOTEL & LEISURE					
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	3.65	3.65	3.55	3.6	745,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.41	0.42	3,060,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.93	0.95	0.93	0.94	810,000
EDUCATION					
Far Eastern University	810	810	810	810	750
Ipeople Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	55,000
DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
Macroasia Corp.	2.8	2.9	2.8	2.9	368,000
Paxys Inc.	27	29	27	29	745,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	5.1	5.1	5	5	84,000
Apex Mining Co., Inc.B	5	5.1	5	5.1	62,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	21,200,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	11.75	13.25	11.75	13	8,282,500
Benguet Corp. A	11	11	11	11	103,000
Geograce Res. Phil. Inc.	1.72	1.88	1.72	1.82	163,800,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.3	820,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.32	0.33	0.32	0.33	5,320,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.03	0.03	0.029	0.03	733,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.034	253,800,000
Omico Corp.	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	486,100,000
Philex Mining Corp.	4.45	4.45	4.35	4.35	9,477,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	24	24.25	23.5	24.25	345,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.75	0.79	0.75	0.77	120,000
Vulcan Ind'l	1.26	1.28	1.24	1.24	885,000
OIL					
Basic Petroleum Corp.	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	3,460,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.014	89,000,000
The Philodrill Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	121,100,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	10	10	10	10	112,000

CURRENCIES

March 29, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.751089	1.000000	48.2180
Japan	Yen	0.006428	0.008558	0.4126
United Kingdom	Pound	1.473411	1.961700	94.5893
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.096122	0.127977	6.1708
Switzerland	Franc	0.617469	0.822098	39.6399
Canada	Dollar	0.648217	0.863036	41.6139
Singapore	Dollar	0.494593	0.658501	31.7516
Australia	Dollar	0.605131	0.805672	38.8479
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.992331	2.652590	127.9026
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.200301	0.266681	12.8588
Brunei	Dollar	0.492970	0.656340	31.6474
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.023619	0.031447	1.5163
UAE	Dirham	0.204556	0.272346	13.1320
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.331400	64.1974
Korea	Won	0.000800	0.001065	0.0514
China	Yuan**	0.097171	0.129374	6.2382
Argentina	Peso	0.241896	0.322061	15.5291
Brazil	Real	0.361797	0.481696	23.2264
Denmark	Kroner	0.134247	0.178737	8.6183
India	Rupee	0.017557	0.023375	1.1271
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.217065	0.289001	13.9351
Mexico	New Peso	0.067859	0.090347	4.3564
New Zealand	Dollar	0.532687	0.709220	34.1972
South Africa	Rand	0.102189	0.136054	6.5603
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022723	0.030253	1.4587

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY Time—March 28, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen.
** Asian time closing rate as of March 28, 2007

Gov't to bid out FTI complex this year

From page B1

age, warehousing and processing facilities servicing food producers, exporters, manufacturers and other sectors in the food industry.

Teves said the Department of Finance still had to get a commitment from the Privatization and Management Office to proceed with the sale.

The sheer size of the complex has made it difficult for the government to unlock values from the FTI property over the years.

In a recent interview, Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap said: "There's a lot of long-term leases and this is a disincentive unless there's a buyer who can invest there for the long term. So that's what we're looking for, an institutional player who can come in, one who can afford to wait, one who can leverage its cash flow, who knows how to parlay (the vast property) into its advantage."

But Teves said it was possible for the government to cash in from the FTI this year.

The government's plan is to relocate state-owned food terminals in urban-rural peripheries, around the centers of trade and urban cities such as Bulacan for the north and Cagayan de Oro for the south. These strategic sites are vital because traffic in those areas is relatively light and they are the places where food producers can market their goods.

The government recently generated P25 billion from the sale of its indirect shares in telecommunication giant Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., resulting in a rare budget surplus in February.

"Privatization is a temporary measure. The key is really the tax administration, but we also need to look for fallback in case there's a delay in (an improvement in the) tax efforts. It takes time for tax measures to pan out so we're looking at other alternatives to compensate and this is (privatization)," Teves told reporters.

The government is also working on the disposition of the government's big-ticket items such as shares in blue chips Meralco and San Miguel.

"We also continue to work with PSALM to accelerate the sale of its gencos and the National Transmission Corp. (Transco)," Teves added. Power Sector Assets and Liabilities Management Corp. took over the assets of National Power Corp. as part of the power sector's restructuring.

Teves also assured that the government would tighten its watch on government-owned and -controlled corporations by developing institution-specific performance contracts, starting with FTI's parent company NFA.

"We are now discussing with the AUSAID (the official development assistance arm of the Australian government) the results of their study on the NFA and their recommendations," Teves said. He noted that the Asian Development Bank was also working on similar performance contracts for the Light Railway Transit Authority, Home Guaranty Corp., National Development Co. and the Philippine National Railways.

Gov't to decide . . .

From page B1

now that it could borrow cheaper money and its overall fiscal condition has improved.

The government is behind its scheduled payments on MRT3 but if it were to refinance the entire package, it needs to explore options on how to raise the money.

Teves said the Department of Finance would have to seek an opinion from the Department of Justice on how to restructure the contract or to seek appropriation from Congress to cover the cost of a possible buyout.

An earlier study estimated that the government could save $1 billion from the early buyout of MRT3 or half of the remaining payments due until 2025. But Sevilla said the government was still studying the valuations. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
Region IV - A CALABARZON
DIVISION OF ANTIPOLO CITY

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY TO BID

The Department of Education, Division of Antipolo City, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for:

NAME OF THE PROJECT	Supply and Delivery of Elementary Tables & Chairs Elementary & Secondary Armchairs and Teacher's Tables & Chairs
ABC & FUNDING SOURCE	Funding Source is the Government of the Philippines CY 2006 GAA (75% Allocation of the DepEd Desk/Armchair Project)
CONTRACT DURATION	One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days
DELIVERY SITES	"Door to door" delivery to various recipient schools (See Schedule of requirements of the Bidding Documents

LOT	DESCRIPTION	QUANTITY	ABC (Php)
A	Elementary Table and Chairs (All Wood)	825	1,650,000.00
	Teacher's Table and Chair (All Wood)	33	151,800.00
B	Elementary Armchairs for Grades 5 to 6 (All Wood)	1,305	1,017,900.00
	Teacher's Table and Chair (All Wood)	25	115,000.00
C	Secondary Armchairs (All Wood)	950	741,000.00
	Teacher's Table and Chair (All Wood)	19	87,400.00
	TOTAL		3,763,100.00

Activity	Date	Venue
1. Pre-bid Conference	April 10, 2007	Office of the ASDS-OIC G/F Garcia Type Bldg., DepED Compound Tel. 630-3722; 630-6854; 630-3421
2. Deadline of Submission of Bids	April 25, 2007	Division Office Conference Room 2/F Garcia Type Bldg., DepED Compound Tel. 630-3722; 630-6854; 630-3421
3. Opening of Bids	April 25, 2007	Division Office Conference Room 2/F Garcia Type Bldg., DepED Compound Tel. 630-3722; 630-6854; 630-3421

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat Office, DepED Division of Antipolo City starting on March 27, 2007 to April 4, 2007 upon payment of non-refundable amount of Philippine Pesos: Two Thousand Only (Php2,000.00).

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184, otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at http://www.deped.gov.ph or www.procurementservice.gov.ph or call DepED Division of Antipolo City at Telefax Numbers: 630-3722; 630-6854, 630-3421.

The Department of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) REMEDIOS G. AQUINO, Ed.D.
OIC-Office of the ASDS/ES I-Science
BAC Chairperson

(PDI--March 30, 31: April 1, 2, 3, 4 & 7, 2007)

CAGELCO II

INVITATION TO PRE-QUALIFY AND TO BID

The CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (CAGELCO II) is inviting all interested bidders to pre-qualify and to bid for the following projects:

1. Supply and Installation of Automatic Voltage Regulator (AVR), 3-units, rated 167kVA each, 1Ø Nominal Voltage at 7620 Volts, ONAN cooling system.
2. Supply of **Pre-Stressed Concrete and Wood Poles** for distribution and sub-transmission lines.

To be qualified, bidder must have fully complied with the following:

1. Accreditation Requirements (for submission to the Accreditation Committee Chairman, Clarance E. Jacinto)
   - a. Company Profile
   - b. Business Registration
   - c. Business Permit
   - d. BIR/VAT Certificate
   - e. Latest Income Tax Return (ITR)
   - f. List of Clients for a period of three (3) years
   - g. Financial Statement
   - h. Compliance with the must technical specifications
2. Must be able to pay P5,000.00 for Item #1 and P2,000.00 for Item #2 for bid documents during the pre-bid conference.

CAGELCO II reserves the right to reject any/or all bid without any reason, waive any formality therein, accept proposal most advantageous to the cooperative and assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify any bidder for expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

Pre-bid conference and bidding schedules shall be informed to all qualified bidders through fax and mails.

Deadline for submission of requirements – **April 13, 2007.**

(Sgd.) BLANDINA Y. MADAMBA
BID Manager/PBAC Chairman

Noted by:
(Sgd.) GABRIEL A. TORDESILLAS
General Manager

CAGAYAN II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
Macanaya District, Aparri, Cagayan
Tel. No. (078) 888-2173 • Telefax No. (078) 888-2940
E-mail: cagelco2main@digitelone.com
Website: www.cagelco2.org.ph

(PDI – March 29 & 30, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
MEGAMAX INTERNET SERVICE PROVIDER INC. U-106 Pearl of the Orient Tower, Roxas Blvd., Ermita, Manila	Yongtae Cho	Operations Manager
OHSUNG TRAVEL & TOURS AGENCY, INC. U-13, 8137 Plaza J, Escriva Dr., Ortigas Center, San Antonio, Pasig City	Michoung Shim (wife of KIM)	Assistant Manager
MEDICALL PHILIPPINES, INC. 5/F Paseo Center, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Jeffrey Scott Williams	General Manager
OPINDER & FRIENDS LENDING & TRADING CO. 2156 Rd. 3, Sta. Ana, Manila	Kamaljit Kaur	Marketing Manager
DHANDWAL LENDING & TRADING CORP. Blk. 3 Lot 6, Zypher Homes, F. Cruz St., Malibay, Pasay City	Boota Ram Nijjar	Finance Manager
ACCENTURE, INC. MSE Bldg., Ayala Ave., Makati City	Nadeem Hussain	Customer Service Representative
CONNECT88 INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower I, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Ximing Lin	Technical Staff
CONNECT88 INC. 28/F Yuchengco Tower I, RCBC Plaza, 6819 Ayala Ave., Makati City	Yang Liu	Technical Staff
IBM BUSINESS SERVICES, INC. 18/F Cyber One Bldg., Eastwood City Cyberpark, E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave., Libis, Quezon City	Jaishankar Adhinarayanan	Deputy General Manager
SUMITOMO MITSUI CONSTRUCTION CO., LTD. 2/F Pioneer House Bldg., Paseo de Roxas, Makati City	Chigi Okajima	Assistant General Manager
MAGELLAN METALS, INC. 3/F 111 Paseo de Roxas Bldg., Paseo de Roxas cor. Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City	Dennis Leslie Thomas	Director/Treasurer
IMAGE-UP INT'L. SERVICES, INC. (SARANGBANG KITCHENETTE) U-201 Millenium Place Bldg., Meralco Ave., Ortigas Complex, Pasig City	Jungjoo Kim (w/o Shin)	Operation Manager
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA MANILA Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Rudiger Herbert Burkard Lurz	Chef De Cuisine
MAKATI SHANGRI-LA MANILA Ayala Ave. cor. Makati Ave., Makati City	Alexander Paul	Executive Sous Chef
SHILOH INTERNATIONAL CORPORATION 503 Alpap II Bldg.,Trade St., Madrigal Bus. Park., Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	Yeon Woo Lee	President

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

The DOLE will conduct a seminar-workshop on strengthening of Private Recruitment and Placement Agency (PRPA) for local Employment on Friday, 30 March 2007. For details, please inquire at 400-6011 and 339-2016.

(PDI–March 30, 2007)

Silver Goose 8 International, INC (foreign based company located in Makati City) is employing:

(1) BOOKKEEPER and (1) ACCOUNTANT

- At least 22 years old
- A graduate of Accounting or similar course
- At least one year work experience in bookkeeping / accounting & related tasks
- Independent & ability to communicate well

*Additional requirements for **Accountant***

- Must be **CPA**
- Must have exposure on internal audit, cost & general accounting & financial statements
- Proficient in filing periodic Gov't Reports; SEC, ITR, BIR, SSS, Philhealth, Pag-Ibig, & others

Qualified applicants pls email their resumés with latest 2x2 photo to
jam.dacara@silvergoose8.com

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BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **H & S CORPORATION** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Export Producer of Garments** with a capacity of 112,320 pcs/year on **a Non Pioneer Status** with project/plant site located at 1998 2nd Street, Old Torres Subd., Tondo, Manila.

Any person with valid objections on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from date of this publication.

(Sgd.) RUDY B. CAÑA
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–March 30, 2007)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **BELLE SOUTH PACIFIC PROPERTIES, INC.** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Operator of Tourist Accommodation Facility (Resort)** on a **Non-Pioneer** Status with capacity of **104 rooms** with project/plant site located at **Barrio Dolio, Panglao, Bohol.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–March 30, 2007)

BOARD OF INVESTMENTS dti DEPARTMENT OF TRADE & INDUSTRY PHILIPPINES

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that **RPJ DEVELOPMENT INCORPORATED** is applying for registration with the Board of Investments (BOI) as **New Operator of Tourist Accommodation Facility (Hotel)** on **a Pioneer** Status with capacity of **198 rooms** with project/plant site located at **Westgate Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City.**

Any person with valid objection/s on the above-mentioned project may file his/her objection in writing, under oath, with the BOI within three (3) days from the date of this publication.

(Sgd.) **RUDY B. CAÑA**
Director
Project Evaluation and Registration Department

(PDI–March 30, 2007)

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WATCHES JEWELRY DIAMONDS
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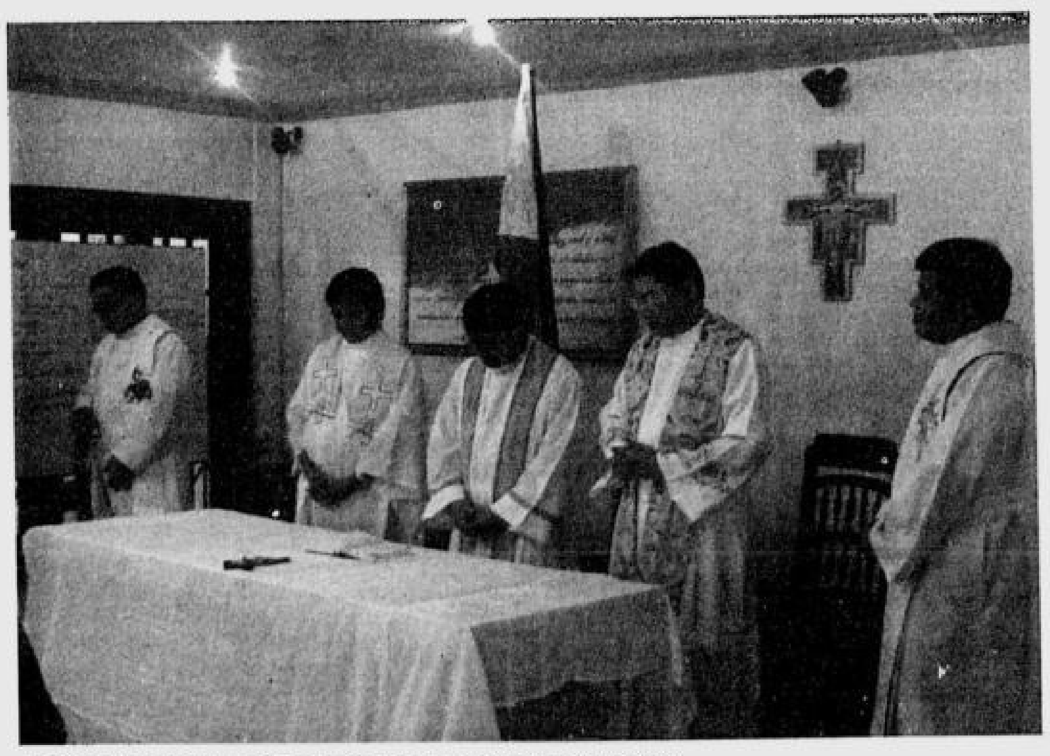

ONE ALGON PLACE 9TH ANNIVERSARY

The Batingaw Class, celebrated mass last March 26, 2007 at The One Algon Place Foundation, in Brgy. Mamatid Cabuyao, Laguna, commemorating their 9th anniversary in priesthood. From right the celebrants are Rev. Fr. Gerry Basa, Rev. Fr. Elden B. Cabuhat, Rev. Fr. Marci Dijan, Rev. Fr. Gabby Delfino, and Rev. Fr. Roy Reyes. For Inquiries in facilities, treatment and rehabilitation and trainings please call TOAPFI at 6800-6120 to 21 or 809-2457 / 0917-5555030 and look for Rudin / Cel Gonzales.

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OBITUARIES

Our Beloved

Geronimo "Gene" Veneracion

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 27, 2007.

His loving wife **Aida**, children: **Roy, Lety & Rey**; spouses: **Susan, Benny & Cristy**, grandchildren: **Rachel, Ian, Mikhail, Vanessa, Tyrone & Tanya**; and his great-grandchildren request all pious readers to pray for the passage of his soul to heaven.

His remains lie in state at Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City until a last mass on Saturday, March 31, 2007 at 7:30 a.m. Interment will be in Baliuag, Bulacan on April 1, 2007.

ISIDRA SANTOS CUNANAN

Joined her Creator on March 25, 2007 at the age of 83.
*She is preceeded in death by her husband **ELIAS CUNANAN.***

Her body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Chapels, Guadalupe, Makati City.

Interment today, March 30, 2007 at 3:00 p.m. at the Manila North Cemetery.

Our Dearly Beloved

CARLOS ROSARIO G. BENGZON

of Lingayen, Pangasinan
(October 7, 1926 – March 27, 2007)

*Peacefully joined his wife **NELA** and our Lord Jesus Christ on March 27, 2007 at the age of 80.*

His children **CARL & JENNY, JOVI & ANNIE, DINDO, MIEL & LEVI, CORINA & JUN** and **GREG & SARAH**; grandchildren **BEANCA & NICO, SAM, DANNI, CAILA, SOPHIA & MARCUS**; siblings **VI (†), LITA & LEE (†), MONI & ISING (†)** and **FELIPE & LETTY**; all relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His body lies in state at Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City.

Cremation will be on Sunday, April 1, 2007 at Manila Memorial Park Crematory, Sucat after the 1:00 p.m. mass at Sanctuario de San Antonio.

BUSINESS

PRULINK PRU LIFE U.K.

Investments of Variable Life Insurance Contracts	Current Week Mar. 27, 2007	Last Week Mar. 20, 2007
Bond Fund - Peso	1.61850	1.60032
Managed Fund - Peso	1.86195	1.82874
Growth Fund - Peso	1.72440	1.67789
Bond Fund - US Dollar	1.3809	1.3743

* Note These investments of variable life insurance contracts are not mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission

INSULAR LIFE

Wealth Builder and Wealth SECURE

Investment Funds of Wealth Builder & Wealth Secure

UNIT PRICES (In Php)

	March 26, 2007	March 19, 2007
Fixed Income Fund	1.272149	1.267407
Balanced Fund	1.373808	1.356482
Equity Fund	1.571981	1.537589

These investment funds are specific to variable life insurance contracts and are not considered mutual funds. Life insurance products are regulated by the Insurance Commission.

The weekly unit prices are also available at www.insularlife.com.ph.

Mindanao gets $83-M loan from World Bank

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE WORLD BANK HAS APproved an $83.7-million program loan for the Philippines, the second of a four-phased program meant to improve household incomes and food security in Mindanao.

In a joint statement with the government yesterday, the World Bank said its board had approved the Mindanao Rural Development Project-Phase 2 (MRDP2), which is meant to improve livelihood opportunities of targeted communities in 225 municipalities in all of the 27 provinces of Mindanao.

The program loan will also institutionalize a decentralized system for agriculture and fisheries service delivery that will promote participation, transparency and accountability.

"The larger scale of MRDP2 (in more than half of the 422 municipalities in Mindanao) ensures that all eligible municipalities are included in the program. We hope that through MRDP2, our beneficiary communities will experience not just increased incomes but significant improvements in LGU (local government unit) service delivery as well," Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said.

"MRDP2 encompasses strong approaches related to community-driven development which will help promote the active and continued participation of indigenous peoples and other disadvantaged groups in the development process," said Joachim von Amsberg, World Bank country director.

The second phase will pilot-test a performance-based grant scheme that will provide additional funds to LGUs to be used for local/devolved development infrastructure projects.

The Department of Agriculture is the overall executing agency of MRDP with the LGUs as the implementors of sub-projects identified and prioritized by targeted communities.

On its third phase (MRDP3), the project is envisioned to continue support for all LGUs covered under Phase 2, focusing on deepening the program by ensuring that all eligible municipalities are fully engaged.

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RAFFLE PROMO!

Grand Prize
1 Toyota Innova
2.0J Gas manual

40
Honda Wave
Motorcycle 100R

Join us in celebrating 40 beautiful years as we give you the Kwarenta Bonanza Raffle Promo!

Complete Mechanics:

1. For every P3,000.00 worth of Mariwasa ceramic tiles in a single receipt, you get (1) raffle coupon. Fill it out with your name, address, tel. number, name of store, attending salesman, invoice no., affix your signature and drop in boxes at all Mariwasa authorized dealers and sub-dealers.
2. For projects and institutional accounts, coupons will be issued to the company paying for the tile purchases.
3. Promo runs from February 1 to December 31, 2007.
4. There will be 2 Regional draws for NCR, Luzon and VISMIN and 1 Nationwide Grand Draw. Draw dates and prizes at stake are as follows:

Regional Draw	Cut-off date	Prizes at stake
May 11, 2007	April 30, 2007	5 units Honda Wave Motorcycle 100R/per region
Sept. 7, 2007	Aug. 31, 2007	5 units Honda Wave Motorcycle 100R/per region
Nationwide Grand Draw	Cut-off date	Prizes at stake
Jan. 8, 2008	Dec. 31, 2007	10 units Honda Wave Motorcycle 100R 1 Toyota Innova 2.0J Gas

5. All draws will be held at Mariwasa Siam Ceramics Plant in Bgy. San Antonio, Sto. Tomas, Batangas in the presence of a DTI representative.
6. A participant may only win once per draw. However, if the customer wins more than once, he/she gets the higher prize.
7. All non-winning entries in the 1st draw will be included in all succeeding draws.
8. For the nationwide Grand Draw, all non-winning entries during the Regional Draws will be transferred inside the major tambiolo where 11 winning coupons will be drawn.
9. All prizes are tax-free, transferable but not convertible to cash. Registration of the vehicle will be shouldered by the winner.
10. Winners from the NCR and CALABARZON may claim their prize at Mariwasa Siam ceramics Plant. Other provincial winners may claim their prize at the store where they bought the tiles.
11. Winner of Grand Prize may claim his/her prize at Mariwasa Siam Ceramics Plant.
12. In claiming the prize, the following must be presented - winning coupon, proof of purchase (sales invoice or delivery receipt), notification letter and any of the following Identification Cards - SSS, Driver's License, Passport, Company/School ID.
13. Winners should agree to be featured in any publicity material pertaining to the promo.
14. Prizes not claimed within 60 days upon notification shall be forfeited with prior DTI approval.
15. Mariwasa reserves the right to certify if the winning entry is eligible.
16. All employees of Mariwasa Siam Ceramics, dealers. sub-dealers, suppliers, project accounts directly served and its advertising agency including their relatives up to the second degree of affinity or consanguinity, are disqualified from the raffle.

"Photos are for representation only. Actual color may still vary"
Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 5170 Series of 2006

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Website: www.inquirer.net/business
Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

Political marketing that sells

Spending millions for name recall may not be the best approach

By Karen V. De Asis
Contributor

MARKETING POLITICOS OR POLITICAL parties are not much different from creating a demand for products or services. This time, though, the challenge is to create a preference for a person rather than a good and stimulate voting intent rather than purchasing intent among a targeted electorate.

Unfortunately, political marketing in the country relies mostly on political folk wisdom, orchestrated by those who claim to have substantive knowledge of local politics and the Filipino voters while sorely lacking marketing expertise. Often this is left to the advertising agencies whose template stops short at developing memorable ads, some bordering on creative absurdity, and where the only advertising intent is name recall and nothing else. Thus, with less than substantive campaign materials, politicos are asked by their marketers to pour heavy investments in media placements with a simple, single intent to drum in their candidate's name into the voter's mind.

But the landscape in political marketing is changing. With media inflation and political funding restricted, political campaigns have to be more hard-working and efficient these days. The same scenario is true for countries with a more mature political environment.

Following are some insights that drive political marketing campaigns that sell:

Electorate market research is vital. Research is important in planning the political candidate's campaign. With various methods available like abridged attitude and image surveys, advertising pre-tests and tracking studies; candidates are able to identify their strengths and opportunity areas, including their ranking against other players and the degree of voting intent of their targeted electorate.

Information like these are significant in enhancing, changing or modifying one's political marketing campaign and strategies at best before mounting the campaign or at worse midway into the effort to achieve a sure-win.

The challenge though is how to use the data appropriately and relevantly to serve the candidate's goal. At the end of the day, accountability for proper use of the data is in the hands of the political strategist and not the research or advertising agency.

The product delivers. The product in this case is the candidate. No amount of great advertising can make up for a bad product as marketing and advertising gurus repeatedly reiterate. The electorate must have evidence that the candidate can deliver. Political marketers and their candidates must recognize that the electorate, even if they come from the lower classes by virtue of their socio-income, are thinking electorates too.

Find a single-minded, credible value proposition that becomes the campaign's platform or battlecry. Here rests the candidate's benefit statement, otherwise known in marketing parlance as the value proposition.

Because trust is an important driver in the candidate and electorate relationship, a candidate's value proposition must somehow fit into the electorate's prior or stock knowledge of what the candidate has done in the past. The value proposition does not have to be unique in this case, but the electorate knows that the candidate is able to deliver better results.

In a journal article by Thorson et al. titled "Effects of Issue-Image Strategies In Political Commercials," it was stressed that there is greater voting intent and a lot more positive attitude towards candidates who single-mindedly address an issue or topic of electorate concern.

Most local political advertising though, rely on generic messages and motherhood statements while attempting to address a host of issues that leave the electorate wondering what the candidate really wants to say.

Enhance the packaging. Just like products or services, political candidates must be made-over to become more appealing and likeable by the prospective electorate. Nonetheless, packaging can only enhance the product and not change the product altogether. Assuming that the product is truly good, the finer details that will make the product more personable, physically appealing and engaging must be addressed e. g., warm, spirited attitude and behavior, speech, clothing, hairstyle, etc.

Create memorable ads that sell the candidate. Intrusiveness or the advertising's ability to catch the viewer's attention, and being remembered are just two of the key elements of successful ads. What is more important is the advertising material's indicative ability to turn in voting intent.

Measured through research, this tells the political marketer whether the advertising campaign is able to convince the electorate to take a step to exert his voting right and cast the vote in favor of the candidate.

Mount ads that have conversation value. This marketing strategy helps stretch media monies and strengthens recall of the candidate and his platform for a long period of time. Young & Rubicam president and chief creative officer Jim Ferguson, who did the ads for President George W. Bush when he ran against Vice President Al Gore, summed up the importance of conversation value in political ads when he said, "You always wish you had that one great spot people will talk about for years and years."

Conversation value need not come from mud-slinging ads. Many political studies indicate that negative campaigns and personality attacks can be counterproductive because they ironically encourage sympathy for the target of the attack.

Focus media monies on voting areas likely to turn in the swing votes. Data from research provides an indication of the voting areas most likely to turn in the vote.

Likewise, not all government seats require national media exposures. Local seats work better with targeted geographic spending.

From air to ground battle. Bring the battle from the air to the ground during the final stages of the campaign period. House-to-house drives, barangay marathons, plaza entertainment and debates; leafleting, street signs and geographically located billboards; interactive websites; e-mail, SMS and MMS from advocates add to the candidate's visibility and help establish a more personal link with the prospective electorate. Al Gore's campaign managers revealed that their "ground strategy kept Gore in the race."

In the end, nothing makes up for a bad product and an ill-thought political marketing cam

POLITICAL/ B2-3

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How to try to still win the elections

Candidates lagging behind will need more money and new images

By Charlie A. Agatep
Contributor

CLINTON: Image makeover that resulted in a turnaround

YELTSIN: Tapped US consultant for a media blitz

WITH LESS THAN 60 DAYS BEfore the elections, will the senatorial candidates who are falling out of the Magic 12 in the SWS survey have a chance to overtake the others and still win?

We believe so, if they have the financial resources and the will to refurbish their public image.

If you are one of the faltering candidates and you want to gallop with a sudden dash to win, you must know precisely how you rate at this time in every voting district. You must overhaul your armory of messages and deliver them through a mass medium with conviction and style. Most importantly, you should have sufficient funding for a burst of radio and TV exposures to wallop a knockout punch at the last moment.

Your image as a candidate is the public's total perception of you. It is the composite of all your past actions based on preconceived ideas that have formed in the minds of the voters, including anything and everything that the voters have received so far about your person. If you have been clowning all along, then your image is that of a clown. This perception may not be accurate but to the voters it is reality.

Politics is image building. As a candidate your image in the public mind is greater than the sum of your actual accomplishments and attributes. The key is effective and creative communications. How you tell your story to the electorate. With only two months remaining before the elections, you can still win.

Consider that when Boris Yeltsin ran for reelection as president of Russia in 1996, his approval rating was at rock bottom and appeared headed for certain defeat. At that point he hired five PR consultants from the US to plan a media blitz. As the campaign progressed, Yeltsin's approval ratings skyrocketed and when the final counting was over, he got reelected president with a large margin.

The game plan executed by Yeltsin's team showed that American style of campaigning worked well in Russia. The PR consultants made Yeltsin pose with the middle class on TV, like planting a tree, shaking hands with elementary school children, and delivering clever speeches. The saga of Yeltsin's victory had been produced into a movie called "The Yeltsin Project" which was shown on HBO sometime ago.

A year earlier, when President Bill Clinton was poised for defeat in the next election, a PR consultant named Dick Morris came to the rescue. Morris managed Clinton's image makeover that resulted in an amazing turnaround. Coming from very far behind, Clinton's ratings climbed to as much as 20 percentage points ahead of his strongest opponents and eventually got reelected by a wide margin.

Both Yeltsin and Clinton started their reelection campaigns as the underdog. They hired PR consultants to turn their image around. Rather than simply appear in self-serving TV commercials, Yeltsin and Clinton starred in media events that were featured in TV news broadcasts.

These two instances prove that a candidate in the verge of defeat, regardless of race, can still get elected through the creative use of communications. Generous funding helps. The support of the party helps. But in the end what counts is how well the candidate crafts and communicates key messages and how extensively he uses the mass media to deliver these messages.

Selling is communication

Selling yourself as a candidate is no different from selling anything—a bar of soap, a cell phone, or a bottle of aspirin. What you want to do is to convince the consumers to grab you, the product, off the shelves. But remember, when you sell yourself as a candidate, you are selling not just an ordinary consumer product but the leadership qualities of a person who will help govern the country or the province.

Your basic tool in selling yourself is communication. The selling process begins with creating awareness of yourself and your leadership qualities. This has to be followed by a comprehension of what you have to offer to the voters, and a firm conviction that you are indeed the right person to serve the people. If you can communicate all these, by word of mouth, via the traditional mass media, and through Internet and mobile marketing, then and only then will you have a chance to win.

Through communications, Loren Legarda is pictured as an active environmentalist, who has served for six years in the Senate. Kiko Pangilinan has carved the image of being independent-minded, aided by his wife—a popular movie and TV star; Manny Villar has always been known as a self-made entrepreneur who reinforces that facsimile with occasional photo ops in the fish market; Francis "Chiz" Escudero has created a positive reflection that lingers on, not only as the defense counsel in the Estrada impeachment but as a "crush ng bayan" among the young.

Communication can create instant perceptions where previously there was none. Or transform your image from that of clownishness to sobriety. Barack Obama was a young, inexperienced, little known senator from Illinois. With just one 17-minute speech which he delivered at the Democratic convention in 2004, he captured and electrified the imagination of the American public and made himself a presidential contender overnight. Miriam Defensor's "I eat threats for breakfast" made her an instant darling of the press when she was head of the Bureau of Immigration. Juan Flavier made himself a sure senatorial winner when he capitalized on the slogan "Let's DOH it" while he was secretary of health.

You are entering the last lap of the electoral race. Flex your muscles. Devise a media event, even just one extraordinary event that will be carried by TV and radio network throughout the archipelago. Shock and awe. Create the best impression of your life.

When you communicate with the voters, it's not just the words you choose to send to them that make up the message. You are also sending signals about what kind of a person you are—by your eyes, your facial expression, your body movement, your vocal pitch, tone, volume, intensity, your commitment to your message, your sense of humor, and many other factors. Be conscious of these details. Go out there before the TV cameras and give it your best shot. The timing is important. Do it on prime time.

Value of research

Before a consumer product is introduced into the market, it is subjected to extensive research. You want to determine the product's consumer acceptability in terms of price, utilitarian value, packaging and overall appeal. In political marketing, the same procedure applies. However, many political candidates are not sold to the importance of research. They think they can rely on their own and their leaders' gut feel. If surveys show they are behind, they say their opponents are manipulating the results. If they are ahead, they say this just validates what they have known all along.

Running for public office without any research findings to guide you is like driving in the dark without any head lamps. You do not see where you are going and you are bound to fall into a ravine. Research is crucial in political marketing—from the initial stage when you have just launched your candidacy, to the campaign stage when the voters begin to know you and your rivals better, to the near-voting stage when shifting of choices is likely to occur.

To be of real value, the research must be designed not just to show your relative ranking. It must disclose why voters prefer you or why they prefer your opponents. The survey findings must be classified by area so you know where you are weak and can then strengthen your chances there, or where you are strong and can protect your lead there. The research must tell what are the strengths of your rivals by region or by province so that you can mount some negative advertising specifically in each area.

(The author is chair of Euro RSCG Manila, a subsidiary of Euro RSCG Worldwide, a global agency. He is also the president and CEO of Agatep Associates, a public relations firm.)

OBAMA: Captured nation's attention with 17-minute speech

HP Launches World's Fastest Desktop All-in-One Series

Manila, Philippines- HP expands its color printing portfolio to include the world's fastest(1) desktop All-in-One series - the HP OfficeJet Pro L7000 series. Offering faster than laser print speeds and lower overall cost per page, the new all-in-one series deliver unsurpassed printing cost efficiencies and enhanced office productivity.

The L7000 series offers industry leading affordability of up to 30% lower cost per page mono and up to 25% lower cost per page colour to that of laser multifunction devices. The new all-in-ones also deliver productivity boosting print speeds of up to 35-ppm in black and up to 34-ppm in color (draft mode). Producing professional laser-quality documents is also quick and easy with Laser Quality Speeds(2) of up to 10-ppm color and 12-ppm black.

The HP OfficeJet Pro L7000 series All-in-Ones are based on HP's Scalable Printing Technology that incorporates innovative advancements, including individual ink cartridges, new print head manufacturing process and new HP Vivera Inks.

The HP OfficeJet Pro L7580 price starts at Php 17,990.00 while the L7380 model is at Php 13,990.00.

About HP
HP focuses on simplifying technology experiences for all of its customers - from individual consumers to the largest businesses. With a portfolio that spans printing, personal computing, software, services and IT infrastructure, HP is among the world's largest IT companies, with revenue totaling $94.1 billion for the four fiscal quarters ended Jan. 31, 2007. More information about HP (NYSE: HPQ) is available at www.hp.com.

Celebrating Filipino businesses and culture in a fiesta

THE PHILIPPINE FIESTA IN AMERICA, AN annual event in the US, consistently draws crowds of over 20,000. Over the years, guests have arrived in droves from several states such as New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, D.C., Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Maine, New Hampshire, New England, Texas, Florida and California.

This year, the Fiesta's ninth year, visitors are also expected from Canada, Hawaii, and even the Philippines itself.

This year's Philippine Fiesta in America is conveniently set for the weekend of Aug. 18-19 at the Meadowlands Exposition Center in Secaucus, New Jersey.

Anchored on the Filipino values of community, solidarity and friendship, the Fiesta provides an opportunity for families and friends to renew ties with fellow countrymen. Key issues and programs that impact Filipinos in the US are discussed in the forum. The Philippine Fiesta in America also provides an avenue for businesses to sell to the lucrative Filipino-American Market—a robust, multibillion-dollar economic force with a high per capita income.

Big-name companies in financial services, telecommunications, information technology, real estate, consumer goods, mass media, logistics, travel, vacation resorts, professional services, nonprofit, and many more have found satisfaction as Fiesta exhibitors or sponsors. This year's major sponsors are Citigroup, Western Union and Commerce Bank.

The Fiesta is also an ideal place for small businesses looking to expand their customer base. Start-ups who wish to throw their hat into the business arena are likewise encouraged to participate and run with the best. Last year alone, over 140 organizations of diverse size spanning multiple industries exhibited their wares; this number is expected to grow as more companies take notice of the spending power of the Filipino-American consumer.

The Fiesta's bustling trade pavilion is the venue where both Filipino and American companies vie for new markets. Competition is lively, as high quality products and cutting-edge services are the order of the day. Empowerment and assertiveness is promoted by providing an atmosphere conducive to encouraging lively interaction between exhibitors and visitors, thus paving the way toward mutually profitable business relationships.

For those who want to brush up on their best practices, leading motivational speakers and industry experts are slated to host a series of seminars tackling diverse topics in businesses, investments, and self-improvement. These highly informative sessions are held every hour from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. on Saturday and from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

The Philippine Fiesta, however, is more than just a trade fair and social gathering. It is also a rallying cry to rediscover Filipino heritage. Numerous attractions entice guests to immerse themselves in all things "Pinoy."

The world-renowned artistry of the Filipino shines in cultural events ranging from traditional dance numbers to show-stopping extravaganzas, as internationally acclaimed visual and performing artists from the US and the Philippines—including some of the biggest names in Philippine entertainment—showcase their exceptional, high profile talent. Past entertainment headliners include Gary V, Judy Ann Santos, Vilma Santos, Nora Aunor, Pilita Corales, Rico J, and many more.

A Children's Pavilion offers the opportunity to learn Philippine folklore, crafts-making, and folk dances coupled with games and art contests.

For those who miss the home-cooked meals of the islands, the Food Court offers a wide variety of dishes from the various regions of the Philippines.

The Philippine Fiesta in America is proudly produced by Philippine Fiesta Inc, the brainchild of Nanding & Mila Mendez of Special Edition Press Inc. (SEPI), a Filipino-owned multimedia/events production company whose business operations include graphic design services, publishing/printing and special events.

For questions, call the Philippine Fiesta offices in the US at (212) 682-6610 or fax (212) 682-2038; text 001-917-612-8861; e-mail sepmgzn@aol.com or visit www.philippinefiesta.com. In the Philippines, call 0917 888-8785 or 753-4571/72.

Bus firm serves Clark airport

GENESIS TRANSPORT SERVICE Inc. has started a Clark-Avenida shuttle service to augment the buses serving the booming passenger traffic between the world-class Diosdado Macapagal International Airport (DMIA) and Metro Manila.

Clark International Airport Corporation (CIAC) president Victor Jose Luciano and Riza A. Moises, president and general manager of Genesis Transport, signed the shuttle service agreement which provides for regular bus service between DMIA-Avenida and Avenida-DMIA.

CIAC is the state-run corporation operating the DMIA.

Luciano and Moises both said that the shuttle service is helping fill the land transport void between the CSEZ and the western side of Metro Manila. At present, two other bus companies, Partas and Philtranco, run shuttle buses between Pasay City and CSEZ. The two companies use the Edsa route.

Modern, air-conditioned buses with audio-on-board have been fielded by Genesis in the Clark-Avenida, Avenida-Clark run, according to Rely Jalbuna, operations manager of the bus company.

Genesis has a major terminal in Avenida which also serves as the waiting area for passengers bound for Clark and the unloading area for passengers coming from the special economic zone. There is a central terminal for shuttle service operators at Clark.

The Avenida terminal of Genesis is at the heart of the "Bus Row" just off a main loading and disembarking point of the LRT. It is also along the main route of jeepneys and Metro Manila-based passenger buses.

"With our shuttle service between Avenida and Clark, the strategic areas that have to be served by bus service between the Zone and Metro Manila will be practically covered," said Jalbuna.

Jalbuna said that just like in the case of both Partas and Philtranco, Genesis has the physical infrastructure, the track record and the modern buses that are required for a high-end shuttle service such as the one at Clark.

Moises said she is deeply appreciative of the professionalism and dedication to duty of the officials of CIAC and the Clark Development Corporation under Levy Laus, the CDC president.

"Mr. Laus and Mr. Luciano represent the dedicated and thoroughly professional breed of professional managers now at the help of state-run corporations. The CDC and the CIAC are well-managed, professionally run and operating at exemplary levels of transparency and efficiency," said Ms Moises.

Jalbuna said that Genesis started its operation 15 years ago with a shuttle run between Paskuhan Village and the malls in Metro Manila.

After making sure that the Clark-Avenida shuttle is operationally stable, Genesis will start two more shuttle runs. The first one covers Mariveles-City of San Fernando-CSEZ-Baguio City and vice versa. The second covers Baler (Aurora)-Cabanatuan City-CSEZ and vice versa.

"The three shuttle runs, we hope, are the start of a long partnership with Clark," said Jalbuna.

JS Unitrade awards their Agents of Excellence

The recently concluded JS Unitrade's Dealer's Night tagged as Agents of Excellence paid tribute to JS Unitrade's agents who have made a big contribution in the company's growth. It is the company's way of expressing gratitude to its loyal and dedicated agents that helped make JS Unitrade one of the top distributors of paper and personal hygiene products in the industry today.

JS Unitrade's brands include EQ Baby Diaper, Dr. P Adult Diaper and Charmee Feminine Protection Products. EQ Diaper provides quality baby diaper at an affordable price, while Dr. P makes life easy for adults needing comfort and protection from incontinence disorder. Charmee Feminine protection products on the other hand, has cornered the teen market and is fast becoming very competitive in the feminine hygiene industry.

EQ Dry product endorser Tintin Bersola-Babao hosted the night of celebration and pride. Highlights of the event were the awarding of the sub-distributors and sales agents who garnered the highest sales volume which contributed greatly in expanding JS Unitrade's revenue. Loyalty awards were also given to honor sub-distributors who have been true partners throughout the years. Each employee of JS Unitrade was also recognized for their dedication and commitment to the company.

This Dealer's Night is JS Unitrade's tribute to surpassing their goals through very hard work, dedication and commitment. It goes to show that teamwork and loyalty go hand in hand for a company's success.

EQ Dry endorser Tintin Bersola-Babao hosted the event.

JESSICA Hou, Dara Lee and Natty Yu of Ever Beauty Corporation, lawyer Roderick Salazar, Samuel Po (JS Unitrade president), lawyer Gregorio Narvasa, and Eugene Go (JS Unitrade VP for marketing).

SAMUEL Po with Eugene Go awarding Paul Uy (center) of Aileen Paul Marketing for achieving the JSU 2006 Excellence Award for Best Sub Distributor.

SAMUEL Po with Eugene Go awarding Paul Rellon (center) for grabbing the JSU 2006 Excellence Award for Area Sales Manager.

UCPB PRESIDENT Jose Querubin (left) with UCPB director Alejandro Asis, UCPB director and chair of the bank's corporate social responsibility committee Rose Casiguran, and UCPB-CIIF Foundation president Edgardo Amistad

Bank sets up coconut nursery project

UCPB RECENTLY LAUNCHED its coconut nursery project with the inauguration of a 10,000-seednut nursery in Prosperidad, Agusan del Sur.

Set up in partnership with the 250-member Farmers Alternative for Self Reliance Multi-Purpose Cooperative, the Prosperidad nursery is the first of six that UCPB plans to put up this year in collaboration with coconut farmers cooperatives.

"UCPB initiated the project to encourage small coconut farmers to undertake a conscious effort to replant coconuts. It's a long-term project and we intend to set up more nurseries in other parts of the country," said UCPB director Rose Casiguran, who heads the bank's Corporate Social Responsibility Committee.

Coconut replanting is deemed key to boost sagging Philippine coconut production.

A large number of coconut trees in the country are already considered senile and way past their prime productive age. The Philippine Coconut Authority estimates that 800,000 ha of coconut land need to be replanted or fertilized.

Casiguran said that each UCPB nursery will benefit at least 100 coconut farmers per sowing cycle, providing them with planting materials to replace the senile trees on their farms or open up new areas for coconut cultivation.

It takes six months to grow the seednuts into seedlings. Recipients of the seedlings grown in the UCPB nursery will be asked to give back three seednuts for every seedling they receive thus ensuring the sustained operation of the nurseries.

The partner cooperatives are being groomed to eventually take over the operation of the nurseries so that UCPB can move to other areas where there are not such nurseries, thus widening the reach of the program.

UCPB has tapped its affiliate, the UCPB-CIIF Foundation to identify suitable nursery sites and qualified partner coconut farmer cooperatives.

Political marketing . . .

From page B2-1

paign. A political candidate's fate lies in the hands of the electorate. While vote buying, quid pro quo relationships, etc. may exist, at the end of the day, only the voter knows what he finally wrote on the ballot. Thus, it is always best to cover all bases and provide the targeted electorate a compelling reason to vote in the candidate's favor.

(The author is a professor of Marketing and Brand Management at the De La Salle Professional Schools Graduate School of Business and is chief brand strategist of MKS Consulting)

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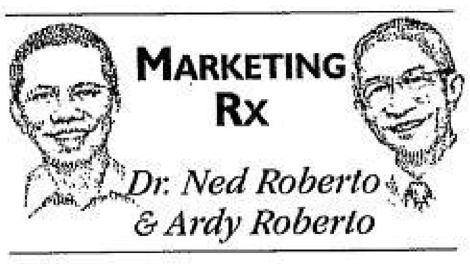


MARKETING Rx

Dr. Ned Roberto & Ardy Roberto

Q: WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO MANAGE THE "fear" among the front liners in collaborating and coordinating with corporate marketing? We know that "fear" is basically due to lack of knowledge of marketing ideas among those front liners.

A: In this specific case, we take it that you are or that you represent the side of "Corporate Marketing." We also take it that by "front liners" you're referring to your sales people or the sales force of your distributor if sales is under a distributor. In such a case (which is typical), your marketing set-up is basically made up of a "Corporate Marketing" in charge of developing the marketing plan and crafting your marketing strategies, and a "Sales Division" in charge of implementing the marketing plan insofar as attaining the sales objective is concerned.

Here's how we'd like to answer your question and its dangerous assumption about marketing illiteracy among sales. Why don't you start by looking at and appreciating the history of your organizational set-up. If it's the typical history, your company most probably started as a sales-driven company. That's how almost all local companies started, and most are still sales-driven. It was only later that marketing came in. Marketing was a late comer but as is also typical, Marketing was quick to take over as top management's (TM's) "pet." Sales soon felt that TM no longer listens to them. On those occasions when TM does, Sales finds that TM just refers them back to Marketing.

And the "deepest cut of all" (borrowing Julius Caesar's description of Brutus' stab in Shakespeare's play) is TM's decision to partition the sales budget between Marketing and Sales. Over all the years before Marketing came in, Sales had that budget all to itself. So if you listen to the grapevine, you'll hear Sales saying something like this: "So what right does Marketing have to share—and to share in no small way—in this budget. They have yet to prove themselves. We've already proven ourselves. We were responsible for sales and we delivered. This company won't be where it is now if not for us in sales."

We're not saying that sales is right. In fact, you and sales are both right. But both of you are only half-right. Therefore, both of you are half-wrong. If you take a few minutes to seriously think about this, you may begin to understand that the "reading" you have of sales is probably also their "reading" of you in corporate marketing.

Sales think that it is Marketing who has the "fear" in truly collaborating and coordinating with Sales. "Truly" means having or being given an equal say in setting marketing objectives and validating the "actionability" of Marketing's proposed marketing strategies. This thinking is also the way they see your not-so-humble assumption about Sales' illiteracy about marketing. Sales is also telling each other that Marketing's fear comes from Marketing's "lack of knowledge of sales ideas" in the field and in action.

Marketing should serve sales

So where's the solution to the problem raised in your question? It must start from an act of humility on Marketing's part. Please don't think this is an indictment of your position. Humility will make Marketing realize and admit that it is truly a Johnny come-lately. So it's true that Marketing has to prove its usefulness, especially its usefulness to Sales who have placed the company where it is now. This is basically the reason why in helping companies who have all along been sales driven, we always recommend that Marketing be called "Marketing Services Department." It's there to provide services in support of Sales. It's only when it has proven itself "indispensable" that we recommend dropping the word "Services" and elevating the department into "Marketing Department."

Humility also encourages Marketing to plan and strategize with Sales. Marketing presents the marketing plan to Sales. In turn, Sales presents to Marketing the sales plan that will put in place the marketing plan in the field of battle, in the sales territories and the stores.

The ultimate act of humility is of course in the budget. We prescribe this: At the start of Marketing's engagement, separate its budget from Sales and avoid taking it out of Sales. Sales does not deserve being "penalized" for Marketing's entry. Of course, you will not look at this as a penalty but that's how it will "arrive" (*yan ang dating niya*) among those whose collaboration you want, namely, Sales.

Feedback at MarketingRx@pldtDSL.net. God bless!

Google seeks world of instant translations

MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA—IN Google Inc.'s vision of the future, people will be able to translate documents instantly into the world's main languages, with machine logic, not expert linguists, leading the way.

Google's approach, called statistical machine translation, differs from past efforts in that it forgoes language experts who program grammatical rules and dictionaries into computers.

Instead, they feed documents humans have already translated into two languages and then rely on computers to discern patterns for future translations.

While the quality is not perfect, it is an improvement on previous efforts at machine translation, said Franz Och, 35, a German who heads Google's translation effort at its Mountain View headquarters south of San Francisco.

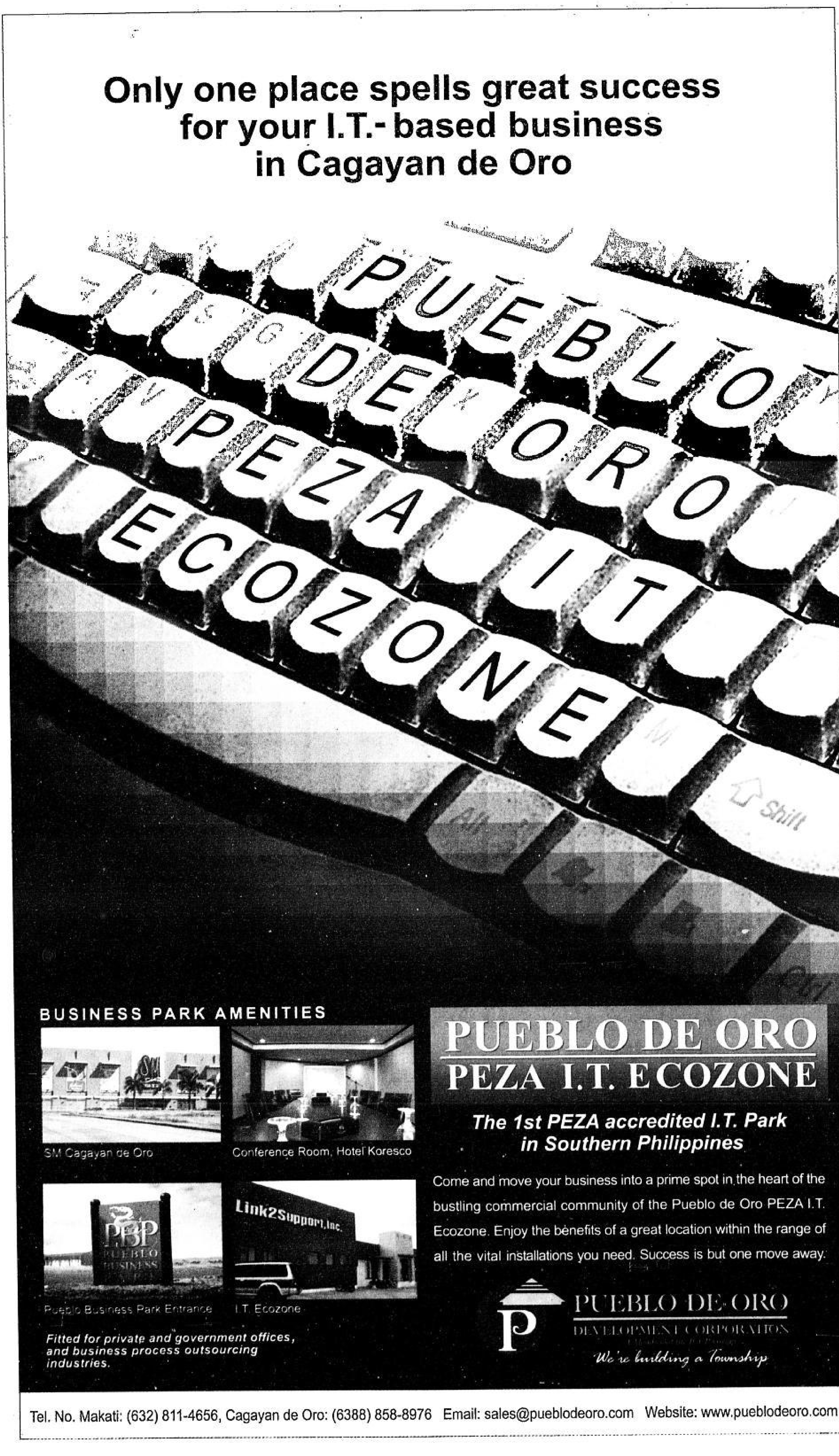
"Some people that are in machine translations for a long time and then see our Arabic-English output, then they say, that's amazing, that's a breakthrough," said Och.

"And then other people who have never seen what machine translation was ... they read through the sentence and they say, the first mistake here in line five—it doesn't seem to work because there is a mistake there." But for some tasks, a mostly correct translation may be good enough.

Speaking over lunch this week in a Google cafeteria famed for offering free, healthy food, Och showed a translation of an Arabic Web news site into easily digestible English.

Two Google workers speaking Russian at a nearby table said, however, that a translation of a news site from English into their native tongue was understandable but a bit awkward.

Och, who speaks German, English and some Italian, feeds hundreds of millions of words from parallel texts such as Arabic and English into the computer, using United Nations and European Union documents as key sources. Languages without considerable translated texts, such as some African languages, face greater obstacles. *Reuters*



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We're building a Township

Tel. No. Makati: (632) 811-4656, Cagayan de Oro: (6388) 858-8976 Email: sales@pueblodeoro.com Website: www.pueblodeoro.com

DMCI HOMES
Because you know.

BUSINESS *Friday*

DMCI Homes Special Feature

Because you know that we don't just build landmarks we build homes.

With a 50-year heritage of building some of the most recognized landmarks around the country like the Cultural Center of the Philippines, Oakwood Premier, Ayala Tower One, One Roxas Triangle, University of the Philippines Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice, Asian Hospital and Medical Center, Manila Hotel and the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, and around the world like the Sultan's Palace in Brunei where DMCI was the lead project contractor, we now offer the same expertise and world-class standards with every DMCI Homes property.

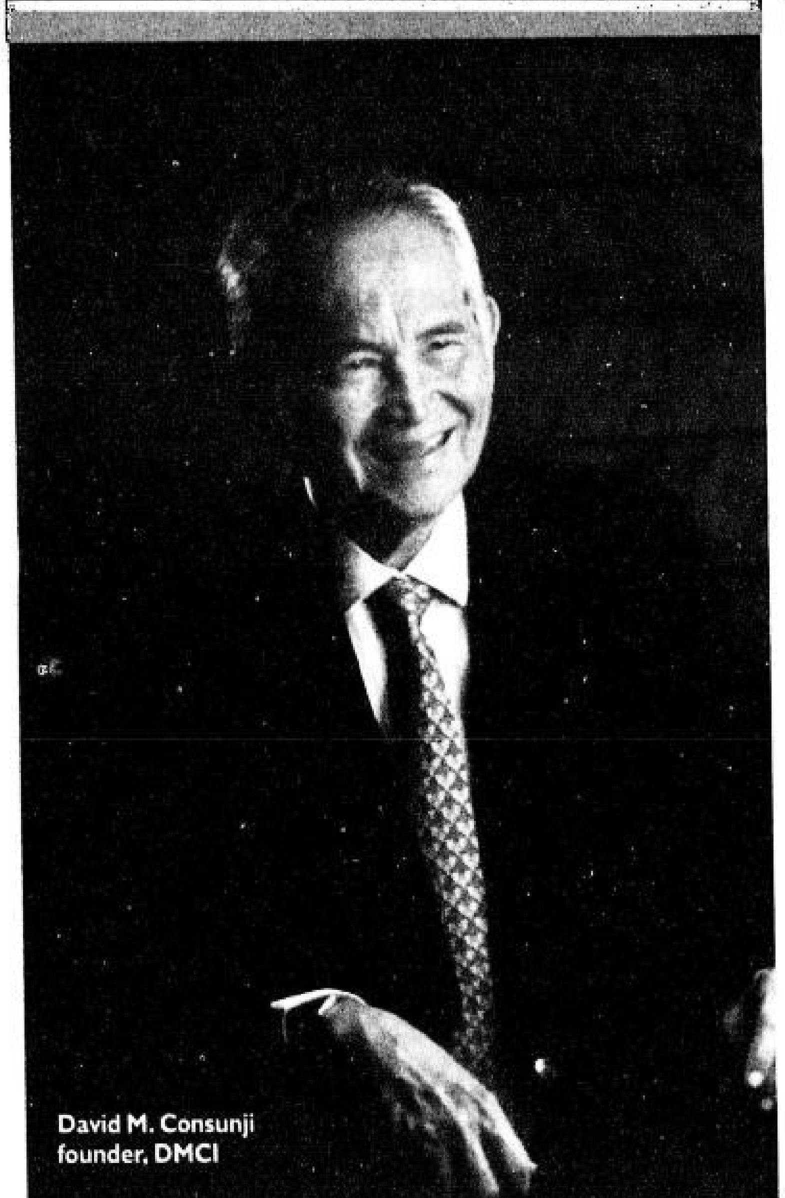
Our passion to build projects with only the highest quality is relentless, and our many years of experience in building landmarks gives us the unique ability to provide first-rate construction techniques that other developers cannot, allowing us to build better quality homes faster.

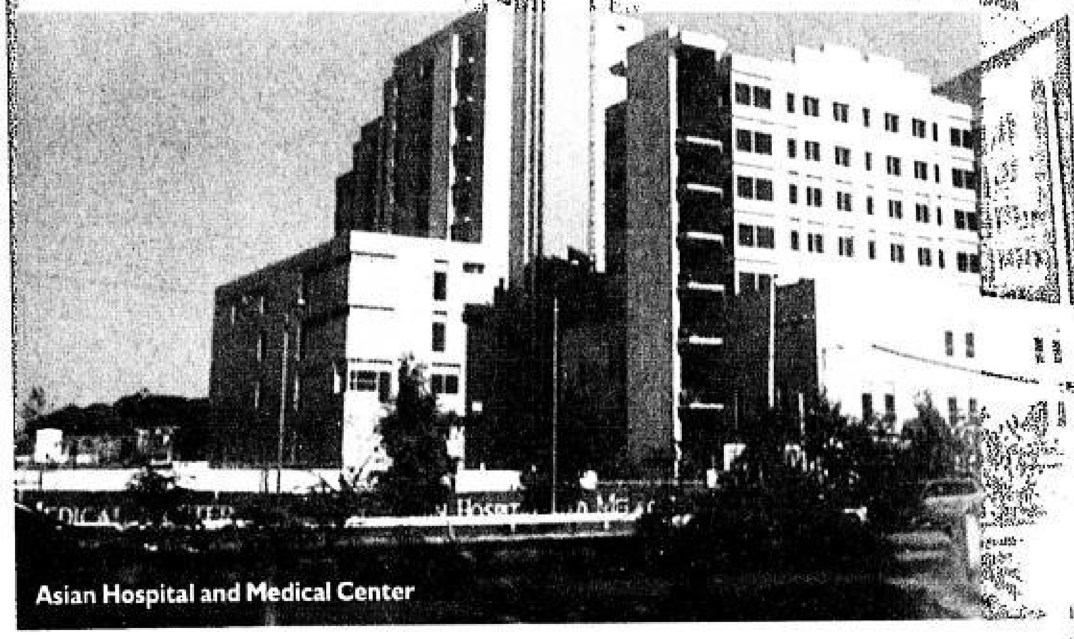
DMCI HOMES
Because you know.

Call 888-3333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com for any inquiries.

DMCI Homes:
Continuing the heritage of builders

Isidro A. Consunji
president, DMCI Homes


David M. Consunji
founder, DMCI


Asian Hospital and Medical Center

Metro Manila's housing situation remains an absolute contrast - on the one hand, cities boast of upscale subdivisions that nestle extravagant mansions, while the premier districts feature towering condominiums and charming townhomes. The other end of the spectrum features cramped apartment units, dilapidated dwellings, and worst, shanties that reflect the dilemma for spiraling costs of land and urban living.

Most average Filipinos, who work eight hours or more a day, still cannot afford to buy their dream home - not even decent housing to serve as a conducive shelter for their families. For today's average income earners, the market could only offer low-quality, poorly-planned structures, sold commercially in an impersonalized manner by companies looking for profit. In turn, Filipinos resort to the only available options: Lease units or buy houses in the suburbs that consume much of the monthly budget and demand longer travel time. Either way, they are forced to live in a house that's virtually and literally miles away from their ideal home.

That is, until, DMCI stepped in.

After earning its well-admired reputation as a builder of skyscrapers, landmarks, roads, and other monumental structures, DMCI gets closer to serving Filipinos by building homes and communities through DMCI Homes.

DMCI was founded on Dec. 24, 1954 by David M. Consunji - a pioneer in the construction industry which introduced on time delivery, high quality workmanship, and advanced application technology for its impressive portfolio of projects. The conglomerate established DMCI Homes in 1999 to expand the legacy of DMCI and cater specifically to the needs of middle-income urban dwellers.

"DMCI Homes is the pioneering vision in premium quality but affordable housing," Isidro A. Consunji, president DMCI Homes, declared. "We are the country's only AAA builder/developer that provides quality homes for the present crop of young upwardly, mobile families with a modest income. Our developments are valued as fully-serviced, centrally located communities that are very relevant for today's increasingly challenging urban scenario. We are positioning our company to address this underserved market."

Consunji elaborated that DMCI Homes refers to the "four As" - Accessibility, Availability, Attractiveness, and Affordability - as basis for conceptualizing projects which effectively address the housing needs of Filipinos today.

"Our projects are accessible to major business and commercial districts and to public transport points. Various types of housing units are available for our buyers who want to move in immediately. We're also confident of having very attractive developments that feature secure communities and offer leisure amenities. And of course, DMCI Homes are known for being affordable - the best value properties in the market today," he said.

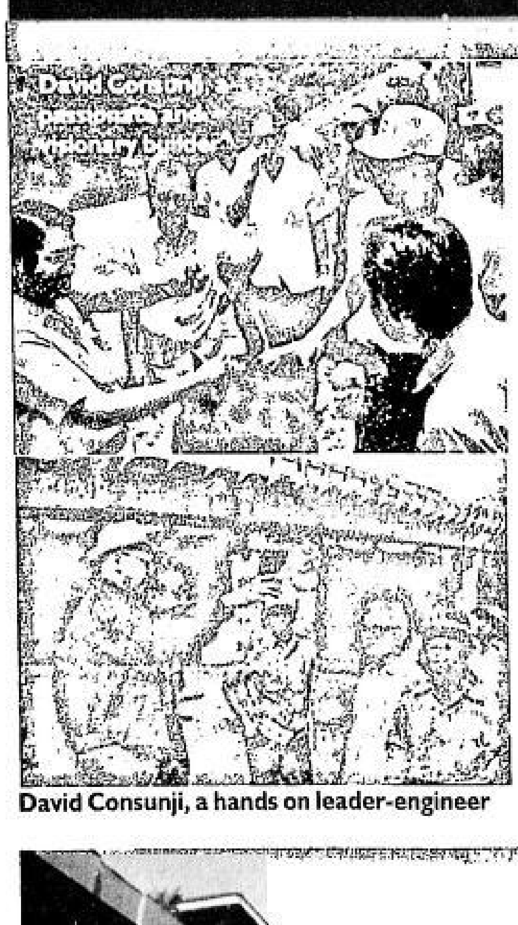
From the company's first project, Lakeview Manors in 1999, DMCI Homes has grown to about 16 projects mostly located in the prime cities of Quezon City, Taguig, Mandaluyong, Pasig and Parañaque.

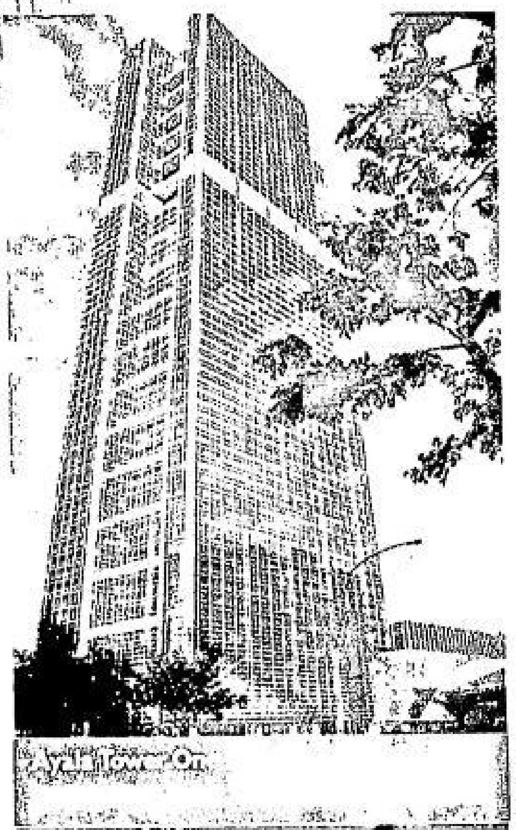
"We provide more value than anybody else in the market at this point in time. No other development has first-rate amenities in such an affordable property. All of these were made possible for something that's normally not affordable. We were able to accomplish this because of our more than 50-year experience with DMCI," Consunji added.

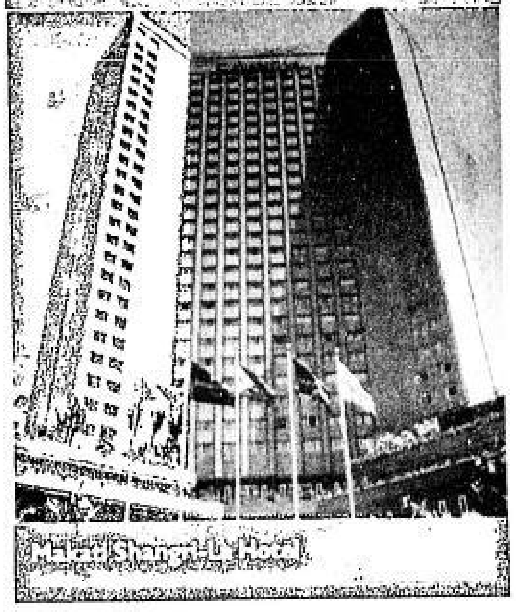
These 50 years saw the emergence of such exceptional landmarks like the UP Diliman's Chapel of the Holy Sacrifice, the Dambana ng Kagitingan in Bataan, Cultural Center of the Philippines, Philippine International Convention Center, SM Megamall, Glorietta 4, Bank of the Philippine Islands, Citibank Tower, Rockwell Center, Makati Shangri-La Hotel, The Manila Hotel, Ayala Triangle, Asian Hospital and Medical Center, and the Palace of the Sultan of Brunei, apart from other admired projects.

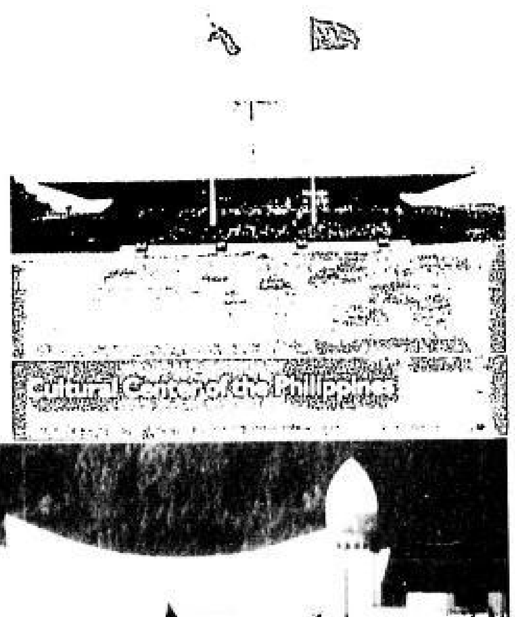
Indeed, DMCI Homes will continue the vision and preserve the pioneering spirit of David M. Consunji, from 1954, well into the 21st century. The company's unwavering passion in building landmarks is now translated to creating homes for the Filipino family.

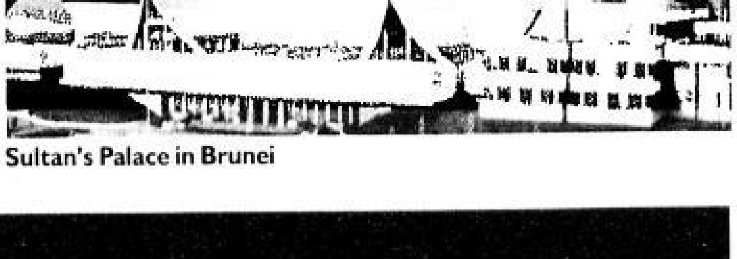
We are the country's only AAA builder/developer that provides quality homes for the present crop of young upwardly, mobile families with a modest income.


David Consunji, a hands on leader-engineer



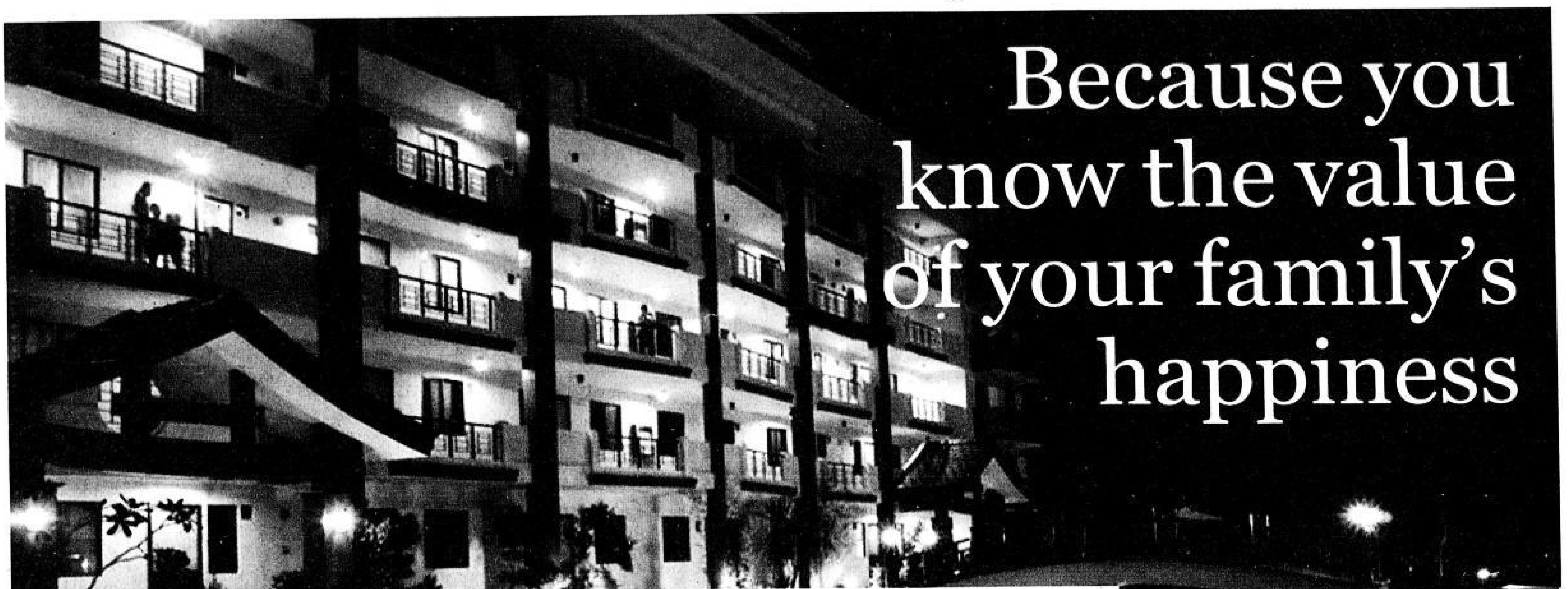




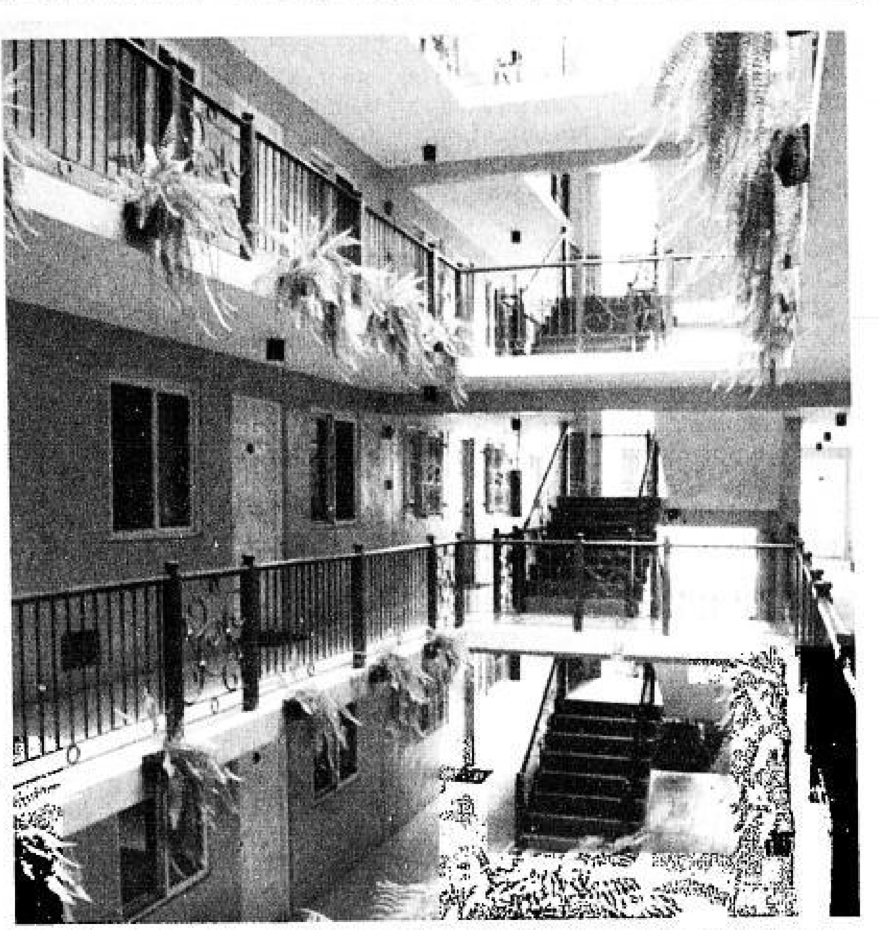

Sultan's Palace in Brunei

DMCI Homes' first venture into real estate.
From left: East Ortigas Mansions, Hampstead Gardens and Lakeview Manors

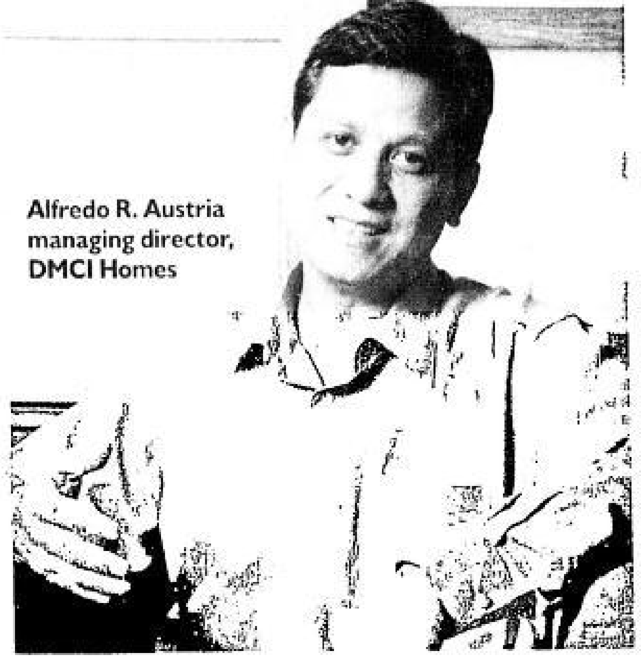
Because you know the value of your family's happiness



Mayfield Park Residences



Single loaded corridors that open up to a garden space or atrium instead of neighboring door which allows entry of natural lighting, ventilation and optimum privacy.

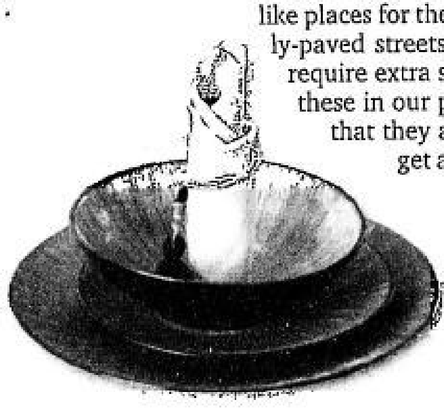


Alfredo R. Austria
managing director,
DMCI Homes

The value of a DMCI Homes property transcends more than the usual offerings of similar properties available in the market today. As premium quality, urban-friendly, and fully-serviced communities created by DMCI Homes - the only AAA builder/developer in the industry - these homes were conceptualized with the needs of the middle-income, young family in mind.

Homes are not just standardized blueprints - they are well-thought of to become decent and livable properties for young families with a modest income who aspire to live in urban areas, but have limited options. DMCI Homes is today's leading choice among informed buyers who want family-oriented developments that offer real value for their money.

"Our buyers are not just looking for a place to sleep in," said Alfredo Austria, DMCI Homes managing director. "They want a development with essential facilities like places for their children to run around in, or a beautifully-paved streetscape which can de-stress them. They also require extra space for utility and storage. We have all of these in our products, and that is real value considering that they are only paying for a housing unit but they get all these special add-ons."



Any homebuyer leafing through brochures, websites, and on-site inspections will be convinced that DMCI Homes units stand out for exceptional attributes, including the following:

In-city modern living

DMCI Homes properties are kept within a 30-km radius, located in close proximity to major business and commercial centers of Makati, Ortigas and The Fort Global City.

Residents' urban living requirements are recognized through accessibility to important locations, from shopping malls, schools, hospitals and government offices, and public transportation points. Instead of allotting more time to long commutes or drives to these destinations, residents can spend more quality moments with the family.

Homebuyers don't need to reside outside the city to enjoy a conducive home environment. With DMCI Homes, they will appreciate a location that combines the pleasures of a cosmopolitan lifestyle with a secured community that puts them at the center of all the action.

Sycamore Tower at Dansalan Gardens

Medium density projects

DMCI Homes projects possess a unique architectural plan, so that each structure is maintained as a medium density development. This is illustrated through single loaded corridors that open up to a garden space or an atrium instead of a neighboring door - a luxury not found in similarly-priced developments which require sharing of common areas. This provision likewise allows entry of natural lighting, ventilation and optimum privacy, to soften the effects of living in a concrete structure.

Projects are also designed to maintain a near 60:40 open space to building footprint ratio, leaving room for ample gardens and more open areas.

Resort living

The suffocating effects of urbanization around DMCI Homes communities are tempered through complete resort features that every resident can enjoy. A Clubhouse serves as the central activity area, equipped with various facilities such as function rooms to hold various occasions from meetings to birthday parties.

This is supplemented by additional amenities like a KTV room and bar for entertainment, and a view deck to enjoy the scenery around the area. Anticipating the tech-savvy needs of its market, DMCI Homes' Clubhouses are now Wi-fi ready, allowing yuppies to work or surf the Net leisurely while spending time with their family.

Swimming pools for both adults and children located inside the development can be enjoyed all day, just like a recreation facility outside their doorstep. Sports facilities encourage basketball and badminton enthusiasts to enjoy their activity within the community.

Further capturing the essence of a leisure resort are well-landscaped open areas, parks and playground, jogging and biking paths, which are incorporated into a DMCI Homes development.

Themed developments

A unifying theme also creates an identity for DMCI Homes projects, captured through distinct architectural design concepts that show first class development features.

Homebuyers can choose from an exciting variety of idyllic themes: Asian, Mediterranean, Caribbean, Modern/Art Deco or Moroccan styled communities.

These themes convey the appreciation for aspirational developments that today's market is looking for. Exposed to global trends and upgraded comforts, homeowners will relish the look and feel of living in a charming, masterplanned community, as premium DMCI properties.

Worry-free living with Property Management

Upon moving in, residents will enjoy worry-free living through an efficient Property Management division, composed of seasoned professionals who handle the upkeep of DMCI Homes developments and day-to-day homeowners' concerns, including waste management and garbage disposal and maintenance of security, housekeeping for common areas, general maintenance of facilities, amenities, landscaping and roads.

The division likewise provides assistance to new residents as they move in, linking them with service providers such as electrical, phone and cable TV companies. Homeowners are awarded with move-in kits and welcome packages.

The Property Management Division has a special assignment to ensure that the community is constantly vibrant through activities that involve the residents, such as inter-project sports tournaments (e.g., basketball/badminton), summer swimming lessons, film showing at the Clubhouse, and training on fire drills, first aid, and security.

Other features of DMCI developments are 24-hour security, gated entrance and perimeter fence, overhead tank, deep well and underground cistern, covered bridge connecting residential to car park, drying area at the roof deck, CATV and telephone lines.

"We're very particular about customer satisfaction. That's why hearing our customers realize that they got a unit with us that's almost similar to a more upscale condo, makes us very proud. What we offer is superior in value for the market we're serving," Austria concluded.

Mahogany Place

DMCI Homes:
Providing premium housing for young, middle income families

Today's young, upwardly mobile families with modest income deserve a premium home where they can raise a family and enjoy the conveniences of city living. While a sprawling house and lot property located outside the greater metro or a prestigious condo unit in the heart of a central business district may sound like ideal dwellings, this segment recognizes a high-quality home with a premier location as considerations that help them decide which type of home they can afford to enjoy.

This underserved segment is the target market of DMCI Homes, the only AAA builder/developer that provides high quality homes that are within reach of a middle-income family. Buyers are mostly aged 25 to 40 years old, are middle managers, married, with an average size of four members (couple with two children). The average monthly household income is P80,000 to P150,000 entailing the need for a family-oriented development that is within reach.

These homebuyers are informed consumers, looking for a first home which is also the biggest purchase of their life in their effort to achieve their goals for the family. Despite having the means to achieve and buy luxuries, these families are very grounded and practical people who could distinguish a smart buy from an extravagant one.

The heads of the family, namely the father and mother, are both motivated people who are employed and in a stage of advancing careers. Seeing that renting a house that has unsuitable characteristics for their children's growth is not worth their efforts, they decide to allot their savings for the purchase of their first home, which should first and foremost be strategically located near their places of work and other important institutions.

Their needs further include a gated and secure community, so that they can leave their children to the care of a nanny or relatives without worrying about their safety.

Once they get home, the couple likewise seek leisure amenities that will help them de-stress from the rigors of work, so a community with such recreational features will be an enticing option. As they attempt to juggle work with rearing young children, a place of residence offering worry-free living would be a big boost to alleviate to their concerns.

Attuned to the lifestyle needs of this underserved segment, DMCI defines its market according to the following life stages:

Family starters

Primarily are young couples, with an age range of 25 to 35, know that it is important to build a good home and prepare for the future of their kids - toddlers or young children aged five to seven years old - which is why they choose to start early in acquiring their dream home.

As well-grounded and practical individuals, they may consider homes with two bedrooms - a master's bedroom and guest room or their future child's room. They are looking for a home that is built by a credible real estate company like DMCI. It must be located near their office, schools, entertainment, dining and shopping destinations, and accessible to public transportation. Security is a top consideration, especially since the couple is working most of the time so they leave their young children to the care of a nanny or relative.

Growing families

Couples aged 36-50 years old with at least two teen-aged children comprise the full nesters. This particular segment is predisposed to buying two to three-bedroom houses - one bedroom for the parents and the extra rooms for the children who are in high school or college. The adolescent children are particularly in a stage when they want their own space, so having their own rooms is an important requirement. With DMCI Homes, residents can enjoy larger spaces within room partitions, compared to other properties of the same price range.

Location is their primary consideration, so that their place of living must be situated near the Central Business District where they work, their children's schools, and other important places like retail stores and public transportation points.

Their needs include spaces for social interaction, such as the development's amenities area which allow their children to mingle with other teens their age.

Security and exclusivity are secondary considerations along with the recreational amenities that can entertain their children. The credibility of the development's real estate company is crucial, since the homebuyer knows that money spent on amortization is hard earned.

Active adults

The empty nesters are couples with grown-up children who have moved out of their care, either on their own or with their own families.

Two to three bedroom houses are the usual choice of this segment - the extra rooms serving as guest rooms for any of their visiting children. Their primary consideration is a convenient location that is easily accessible to groceries, drugstores, hospitals, community institutions, and public transportation points, which would require less travel time.

The couple would prefer a community which features great amenities, charming landscaped gardens, and lots of open spaces. This environment makes them calm and relaxed as they enjoy a more leisurely lifestyle. Security and exclusivity are likewise important requirements.

After taking care of their children, they are now at a point to enjoy their own independence, so they seek to socialize more with people of their age. DMCI Homes' communities address these needs through amenities such as the Clubhouse where associations can conduct their meetings and other social events. There is also enough landscape public area so that the environment gives a feeling that is close to nature therefore, gives a more relaxing, calm ambiance for their leisure strolls in the afternoon.

Balikbayans

The OFW market continues to grow for the real estate sector, with Filipinos able to invest on properties while working abroad. Once they go home, they can enjoy the fruits of their labor and stay in their own house in a world-class community.

What DMCI Homes offers them is a hassle-free move-in policy, with available units ready for occupancy. The Property Management division also offers them a lock up and go system, which entails security and peace of mind even if the balikbayan leaves his/her home for a long period of time.

Speed to market

As a AAA builder/developer owning more than 50 years' experience in the construction industry, DMCI Homes has found the formula for providing premium quality homes for the underserved middle-income market of Filipinos.

"Our standards are built on service, responsibility, skill and speed," said Alfredo R. Austria, managing director of DMCI Homes. "As an experienced construction company, we know the best consultants in the industry to help us come up with efficient, optimal designs to get the best value product. It also has a lot to do with the fact that we are both the builder and developer, so we're able to remove unnecessary expenses and deliver units faster than other developers."

10% downpayment

Buyers are required to pay only a 10% downpayment, after which they can move in immediately and enjoy the lifestyle of a DMCI Homes community. Clients don't have to wait for a long time to appreciate their units.

At the same time, they don't need to pay double: paying rent for their apartments while paying monthly amortizations for their units.

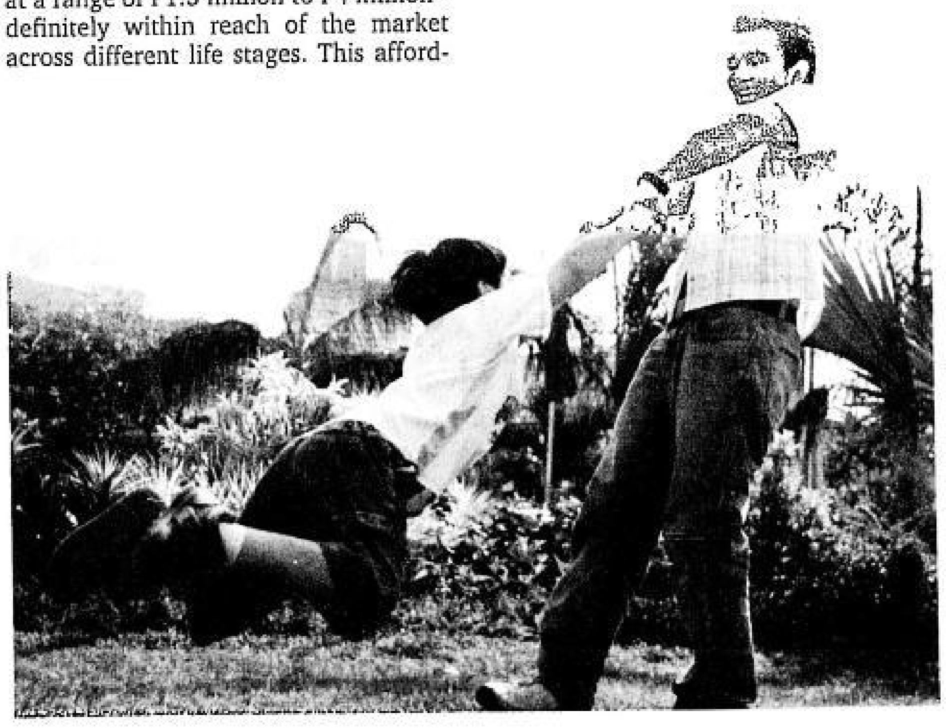
Right pricing

An affordable pricing scheme is used to entice the underserved middle-income segment. DMCI Homes are pegged at a range of P1.5 million to P4 million - definitely within reach of the market across different life stages. This affordability is an asset for homebuyers looking for premium properties with an uncompromised quality. Austria said that they are able to maintain such pricing because as builder/developer, DMCI Homes gets to build a quality product at lesser costs.

Two-year warranty

An assurance of quality is imposed through a two-year warranty offering by DMCI Homes. This feature also reflects the confidence of DMCI Homes for having a good product, assuring clients of their commitment to provide product quality for two years.

"What we offer is a property that gives the same features as upper-scale developments, but is within reach of the middle income Filipino. For a relatively lower amount, you can enjoy an upgraded lifestyle in our communities. Last year, we delivered more than 2,000 units to homebuyers. This year, our target is close to 4,000 units. That's 4,000 new home owners who will be talking as satisfied customers of DMCI Homes," Austria concluded.



What we offer is a property that gives the same features as upper-scale developments, but is within reach of the middle income Filipino

Because you know that you don't have to wait.

DMCI Homes offers unique and easy opportunities to finally own your dream home... NOW. As the only triple A builder/developer in the country, our average speed to market and finished-project turnover is exceptional, making most of our properties ready for occupancy. Our properties are priced just right, putting affordable comfort within reach, so you don't have to wait years before buying.

With our 10% downpayment-move in offer for units that are ready for occupancy, you know that you never have to wait to move in. You can move in at once, so you avoid having to pay double for the monthly amortization of the unit you're buying and the monthly rent of your current residence. Plus, we offer a 2-year customer warranty to assure you that we trust our product and know it's good.

DMCI HOMES

Because you know.

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The vision that is Township Central

A city in synergy, a community in harmony - this is the vision of Township Central, one of the most exciting developments of DMCI Homes. Township Central highlights DMCI's construction and master planning expertise in creating a true City of Tomorrow.

Occupying 86 hectares of land in the progressive city of Taguig, Township Central is designed to become a mixed-use residential community that will house a variety of residential projects. "Because our land bank is rather large, it is synergistic if all the housing projects that we propose for the area are integrated into one grand development plan," shared Reynaldo C. Salazar, business development director of DMCI Homes. "Township Central will feature several housing projects, from subdivisions to medium-rise residential buildings, to high-rise condominiums, each with its own set of amenities."

Township Central is like a self-contained community. It is situated near other major business and commercial districts, as well as, educational and medical institutions, within easy reach.

As Township Central is a relaxing enclave within a city, careful planning was done for road construction and zoning of the different areas. The privacy and comfort of residents were high on the list of considerations when planning the main road, and intersections were minimized to ensure a faster flow of traffic.

Areas for high-rise development are positioned near the main roads of C5 and the diversion road linking to C6, to make them accessible.

The low-density section will act as the transition on route to the DMCI Homes. This will prepare residents to a more relaxed arrival to their homes coming from the concrete jungle of MCBD, BGC or even Ortigas CBD. Several pocket parks, where the entire community can come together.

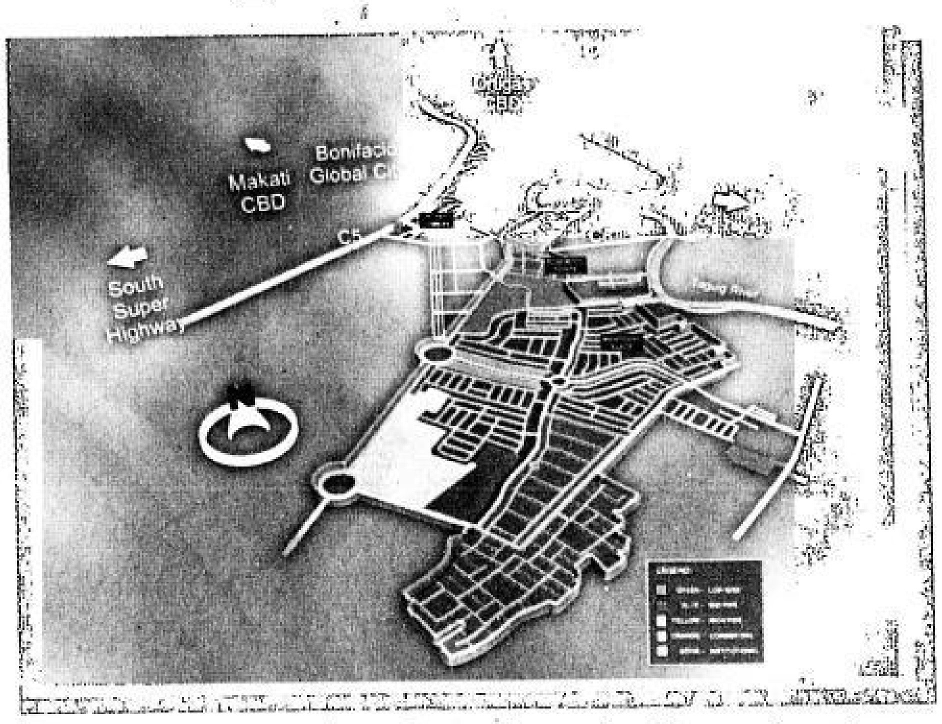
The mid-rise section is strategically-placed surrounding the development, to ensure that environment does not look cramped. It also acts as a transition separating the high density projects from the low density developments. This allows the natural entry of light and unrestricted flow of the wind.

Through careful zoning, the residential developments will be complemented by commercial areas. As a focal point located along the main thoroughfare, a two-storey community-scaled commercial hub will house some anchor stores and neighborhood retail establishments. The retail establishments will serve the everyday need of its future residents.

An institutional zone, on the other hand, will house the community institutions such as: police and fire station, barangay hall, schools and a church, in anticipation of residents' future needs.

To promote "smart living", DMCI also makes use of "smart" engineering solutions - gleaned from years of following world-class building and design principles - in creating Township Central. There is efficient use of space, and building designs allowed for the natural flow of light and ventilation.

Already, DMCI Homes has begun to make the vision of Township Central a reality. Its developments in Taguig, which includes Rosewood Pointe and Mahogany Place will soon be joined by other residential projects as DMCI Homes continues to unify them under one grand community.



With the development of Township Central, DMCI Homes underscores its positions as the only triple-A builder/developer that provides premium quality, urban friendly, fully-serviced communities to young middle income families. Backed by DM Consunji Inc's more than 50 years of experience in the construction business, it has built its reputation and trademark in workmanship. DMCI Homes is now on its way to the top list of reliable names in creating quality homes and communities.

Because you know: Taking the DMCI Homes story to heart

MORE THAN 50 YEARS HAVE PASSED SINCE David M. Consunji first set forth to establish a company that would gain repute for excellence in the construction industry. Today, that institution has paved the way for another company to make its own mark for the Filipino people, by providing quality and affordable homes for the young, middle income family: DMCI Homes.

DMCI Homes is today's leading choice among homebuyers who want family-oriented developments that offer uncompromised value, along with real affordable comforts. Its impressive list of projects targets the underserved market of middle-income earners who seek to realize their dream: To own a home they can truly call their own.

From a virtually young company started seven years ago, DMCI Homes is now ready to embark on a more ambitious direction, as the only triple A builder/developer catering to the needs of the underserved market.

Embracing a new thrust

To communicate the DMCI Homes brand story and share light on its most exciting projects, the company recently held a series of events for its employees, sellers and future residents.

The two-day event featured a series of inspirational talks that aim to empower the members of the DMCI Homes family with knowledge of the company's brand values: customer-orientation, integrity, excellence and interdependence.

The sales conference, hosted by TV personalities Cito Beltran and Cathy Yulo began with lectures by Brandlab's Jos Ortega on branding, DMCI Homes' Jun Garing who discussed great salesmanship, and motivational speaker Anthony Pangilinan who expounded on the value of teamwork.

DMCI managing director Alfredo Austria then gave a presentation of the DMCI Homes brand story.

From the discussions with the DMCI Homes employees and sellers, it was clear that the company is serious about enhancing its brand as a "hero of the underserved" and accepting the challenge to connect with its target market - millions of middle-income families seeking a suitable home.

Because you know

During the event, DMCI Homes also launched its new campaign: "Because you know."

The campaign speaks to the customer, empowering today's buyers with the knowledge that there is a variety of exciting living options from which they can choose. It also refers to the smart choice made by informed buyers, who are influenced by aspirations to search for the right home to house his family. Location, facilities, affordability, security, and the developer's track record are among primordial concerns, which will help the buyer decide on finding the right home.

It also reflects on the kind of buyers DMCI Homes is targeting - buyers who are very discerning, and careful to evaluate each investment. Every decision is made after careful thought and planning, with lesser emphasis on prestige and stature in any address - hence the term "Smart Living."

Flagship project launch

The two-day event culminated with the launch of DMCI Homes' six flagship projects, held at the main lounge of the Manila Polo Club. The exclusive affair brought together select business partners, investors and VIP clients who had a first glimpse of DMCI Homes' new campaign.

The highlight of the evening was an audio-visual presentation of DMCI Homes' flagship projects: Township Central, Cypress Tower, Rosewood Pointe, Riverfront Residences, Tivoli Gardens and Alta Vista de Boracay.

As DMCI Homes aims to provide young families with modest incomes with access to high quality homes in accessible locations, the company's array of exciting developments truly presents this market with living spaces that can suit their needs.

It's a new journey for DMCI Homes - taking on the cudgels of more than 50 years treaded by its mother company, DMCI. The road may seem long and winding, but along the path the skyline becomes clear with the emergence of premium quality and affordable houses that serve as homes to young, middle-income Filipinos. For DMCI Homes, this makes the journey all the more worthwhile and exciting.

Shown are (from left) DMCI Home president Isidro Consunji; in-house sellers and brokers' actively participating in the workshop; Management Committee members headed by managing director Alfredo Austria; DMCI e-broker manager Cathy Yulo and TV personality Cito Beltran as hosts of the two-day-affair; and top executives of DMCI Homes with guest speaker Jos Ortega.

Top executives of DMCI Homes and ManComm members together with top in-house sellers vying for the quarterly sales awards.

Top external brokers vying for the quarterly sales awards with DMCI Homes executives.

Amy Ravara, property sales manager Bonifacio Heights (Div. 2); Ofelia Lantin; Ferdie de Leus, sales manager (Div. 2); Harry de Leus, sales manager (Div. 2); Amb. Rechebei of Palau; Alandro Lantin.

Reynaldo Salazar, director for business and development, DMCI Homes; Nenita Lim-Cruz, CEO, Landcom Asia; Isidro Consunji, president, DMCI.

Elmer Civil, director for construction and design, DMCI Homes; Charlie Gorayeb, president Goram Dev't Corp; Federico Romero Quimbo, President, Pag-ibig; Florante Ofrecio, director for sales, DMCI Homes.

Eduardo Miranda, managing director Macquarie; Mari Maravillas, receiver, Maynilad; Joel Lim, president, Metro Pacific Investments.

Helivi Vicentino, sales manager, International; Gil Demato with wife Monique; Lourdes Dumancas.

DMCI Homes and UCPB executives (from left) Joanna Kong, Cecile Wambangco; Cora Guevarra; Vangie Achacoso; Grace Mercado; Jean Go; Anabel Gan; Joey Macadaeg.

Randy Estrellado, CFO, Metro Pacific Investments; Joel Lim, Metro Pacific.

Romy Pulido, Equitable PCI; Alfredo Austria, managing director, DMCI Homes.

Randy Estrellado, CFO, Metro Pacific Investments; Grace dela Cruz, Picasso Feder Bautista Law Office; Jess Bass, Marubeni Corp.

Tet Abad Santos, director for international sales, DMCI Homes; Lee de Claro, VP and head, UCPB; Evangeline Atchioco, deputy director for finance, DMCI Homes.

Former HUDCC Vice-Chairman Amado Bagatsing with Elmer Civil, director for construction and design, DMCI Homes, and wife Becca.

Actual shot of Mayfield Park Residences.

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Sycamore Tower,
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Mid-rise Condominiums
Riverfront Residences
Rosewood Pointe
Raya Garden Condominiums
The Manors at Celebrity Place
Mayfield Park Residences
Bonifacio Heights

Subdivisions
Villa Alegre Homes
Woodland Hills
Mahogany Place

Residential Leisure
Alta Vista de Boracay

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DMCI Homes: Building lasting communities for Filipino families

FOR DECADES, DMCI HAS BEEN the contractor of choice for many builders and developers, trusted for its expertise in construction, reliability for on-time delivery, and steadfast commitment to quality. These same qualities are now DMCI's guiding principles in pursuing its vision to provide lasting communities for Filipino families through DMCI Homes, one of the country's fastest growing and most dependable real estate developers today.

DMCI Homes has an impressive array of projects in various parts of the metro and even in the country's premier summer destination. In each development, DMCI Homes ensures that residents will not only have a home of one's own, but also enjoy being part of vibrant, growing communities.

Township Central

DMCI Homes has also embarked on a remarkable project that combines different living arrangements in one grand location. Occupying eighty-six hectares of land in the progressive city of Taguig, Township Central aims to be a mixed-use development masterfully planned and designed to contain both residential villages and buildings. This will be complemented by a community commercial area that will feature retail and service shops. A portion of the development is also dedicated to institutions like schools and churches. Township Central's location also makes major business and commercial centers easily accessible.

Cypress Towers

In the city, DMCI Homes offers a grand array of high-rise developments that will fit the varying needs of young, middle-income families. One particularly impressive project, Cypress Towers, boasts an ingenious pinwheel configuration that provides optimal natural lighting and ventilation in all units of this high-rise residential building. Cypress Tower features a contemporary design that will surely appeal to families with more modern preferences or lead a cosmopolitan lifestyle, and its proximity to the Makati Central Business District also provides more convenience for its residents.

Tivoli Gardens

Another exciting development is Tivoli Gardens, which provides city dwellers a taste of the tropics. Tivoli Gardens is the only high-rise garden community that provides access to lush Asian tropical sky-gardens, anytime of the day. Imagine, six high-rise towers with about 24 - 28 residential levels that have views of greens every five floors within the building. This development allows residents to enjoy nature amidst the urban jungle.

DMCI Homes also includes in its expansive portfolio a number of mid-rise residential developments that have flexible floor plans and generous outdoor spaces masterfully planned to complement existing surroundings, thus, offering a greater sense of community.

Riverfront Residences

DMCI Homes' Riverfront Residences provide residents a unique living experience. This mid-rise community features a 3,000-square meter manicured linear park that offers stunning views of the scenic Marikina riverside. The park serves as the centerpiece of the development which offers a variety of amenities that can be enjoyed by all residents.

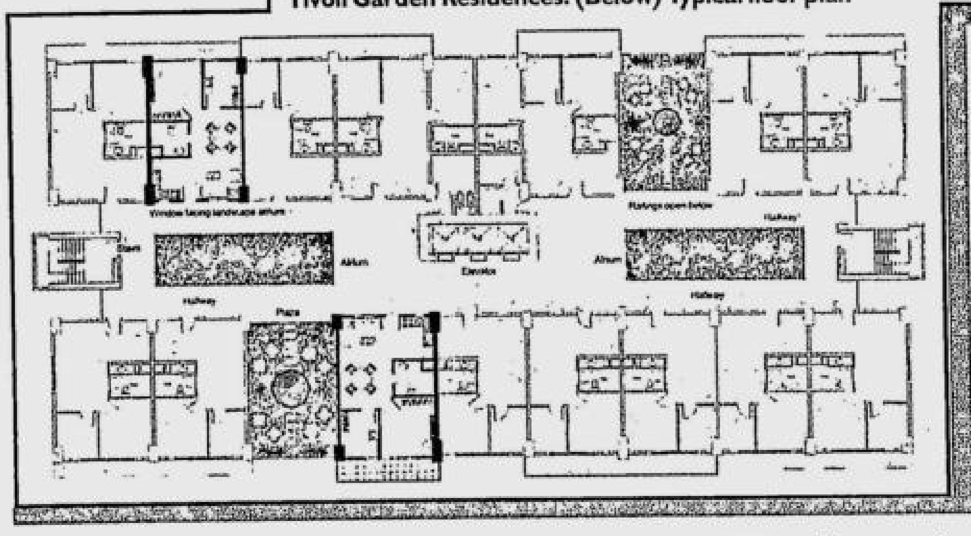
The expansive lawn invites children to play various games such as frisbee-throwing, ball catching, and even traditional folk games like luksong tinik. A jogging path also challenges the fitness buffs to run a mile or two around the scenic area. There is also a Fitness station complete with monkey bars and ropes courses; step pads which kids can tread; and, a playground for fun time under the sun which the whole family can enjoy.

A tree court meanwhile provides shade for those seeking a good reading spot, perhaps do paintings or those looking for a quiet nook to meditate. For those who want to simply stare out into the sunrise or sunset, there is a view deck offering the majestic panorama of the Ortigas skyline, or the Gazebo, where everyone can congregate or just lounge around.

For garden enthusiasts, there is a Planting area that serves as a mini-farm where anyone can plant - and harvest! - fruit-bearing trees, herbs, and flowering plants. It's like an extension of their lawn where herbs and spices can be readily plucked while cooking a delightful meal for the family.

Finally, the park has Grill-out pits where families can enjoy BBQ parties with family and friends - at home within a vibrant, wholesome community.

Tivoli Garden Residences. (Below) Typical floor plan



This reflects the commitment of DMCI Homes to serve the average, middle-income family, through the completion of a wide array of high quality projects that are also affordable.

Rosewood Pointe facade

Rosewood Pointe

The Asian-style architecture of DMCI Homes' Rosewood Pointe also makes this mid-rise community a beautiful and exciting development. The only Neo-Asian family condominium in the city, Rosewood Pointe imbibes a resort-like atmosphere, perfect for those who aspire for a calmer, relaxed and unhurried home environment for their families.

Located at the center of the community is a lush, 8,000-sqm Chinese Asian garden - the focal point of the development which attracts residents to converge for leisure activities. A two-structured clubhouse and multipurpose hall connected by a bridge can serve as venue for various events. The facility is equipped with an AV room, gym and playground. A koi pond softens the architecture along with plenty of open, warm spaces.

These premium residential buildings offer all the distinct features of a DMCI Homes development. Choice locations provide easy and convenient access to business and commercial districts, as well as, educational and medical institutions.

Alta Vista de Boracay

Looking to provide Filipino families with more choices - and chances -- to experience a different living experience, DMCI Homes is also setting new standards in residential leisure living with the development of Alta Vista de Boracay. A condotel-residential community, Alta Vista de Boracay provides a gorgeous, private and secure resort experience in the country's premier vacation destination.

Buyers can choose to buy a piece of paradise with beautiful condo units, or stay at the marvelously managed condotel, which offers first-rate hotel service. Either way, residents can have a memorable stay any time they wish at Alta Vista dé Boracay.

Unit owners also have an option to enroll their units under a Leaseback Program so that their units can be rented out to other tourists while they are away. The income from such arrangement will help them pay their monthly amortization and recoup their investment in five to seven years.

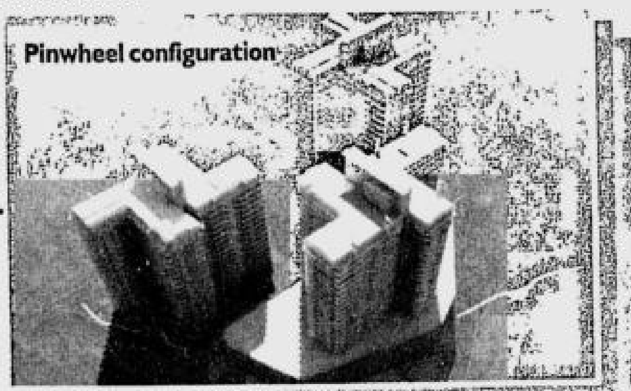
DMCI is also transparent in declaring their revenue projection for these five flagship projects. From a total development cost of P10.5 billion for the five projects, they are looking to acquire a total sales revenue of P12.8 billion.

This reflects the commitment of DMCI Homes to serve the average, middle-income family, through the completion of a wide array of high quality projects that are also affordable. And for this builder/developer, this is just the start. More quality projects are lined up for the Filipino family, to enjoy the DMCI Home lifestyle.

Alta Vista de Boracay building perspective

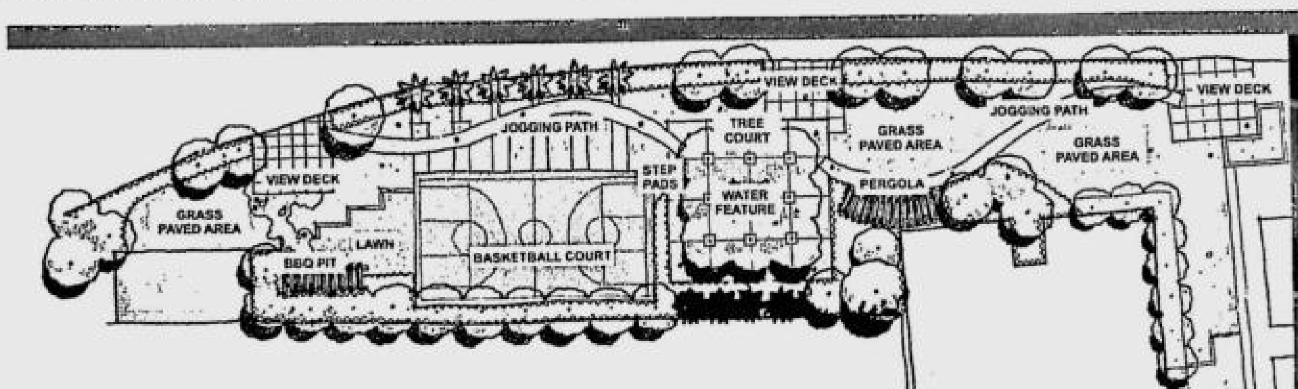
DMCI Homes has an impressive array of projects in various parts of the metro and even in the country s premier summer destination. In each development, DMCI Homes ensures that residents will not only have a home of one s own, but also enjoy being part of vibrant, growing communities.

For more information on DMCI Homes projects, please call 888-3333 or visit www.dmcihomes.com

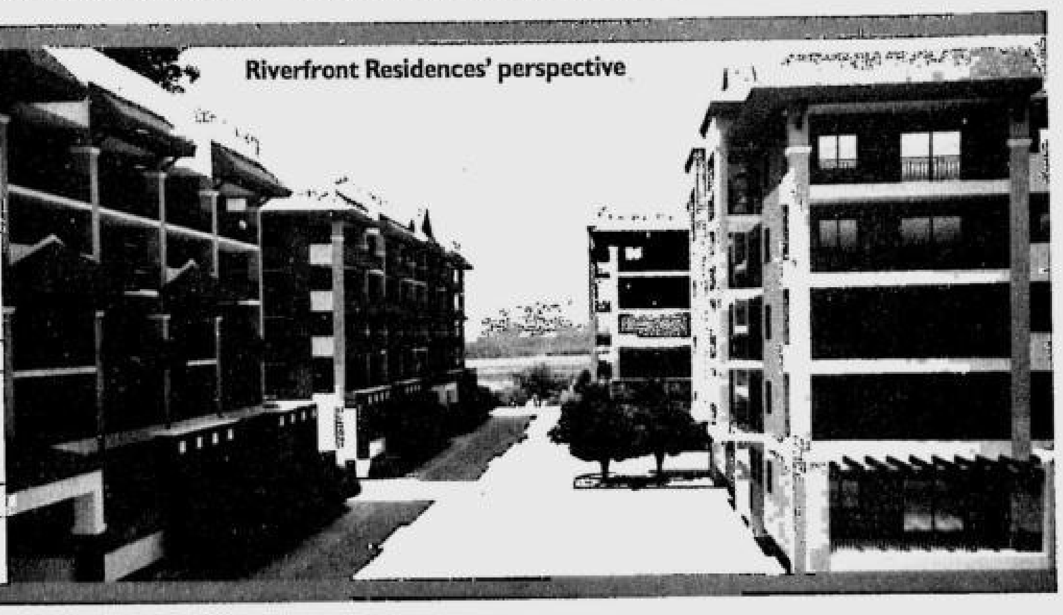


Pinwheel configuration

Perspective of Cypress Towers



A section of Riverfront Residences' Linear Park



Riverfront Residences' perspective

Website: www.inquirer.net/lifestyle

LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

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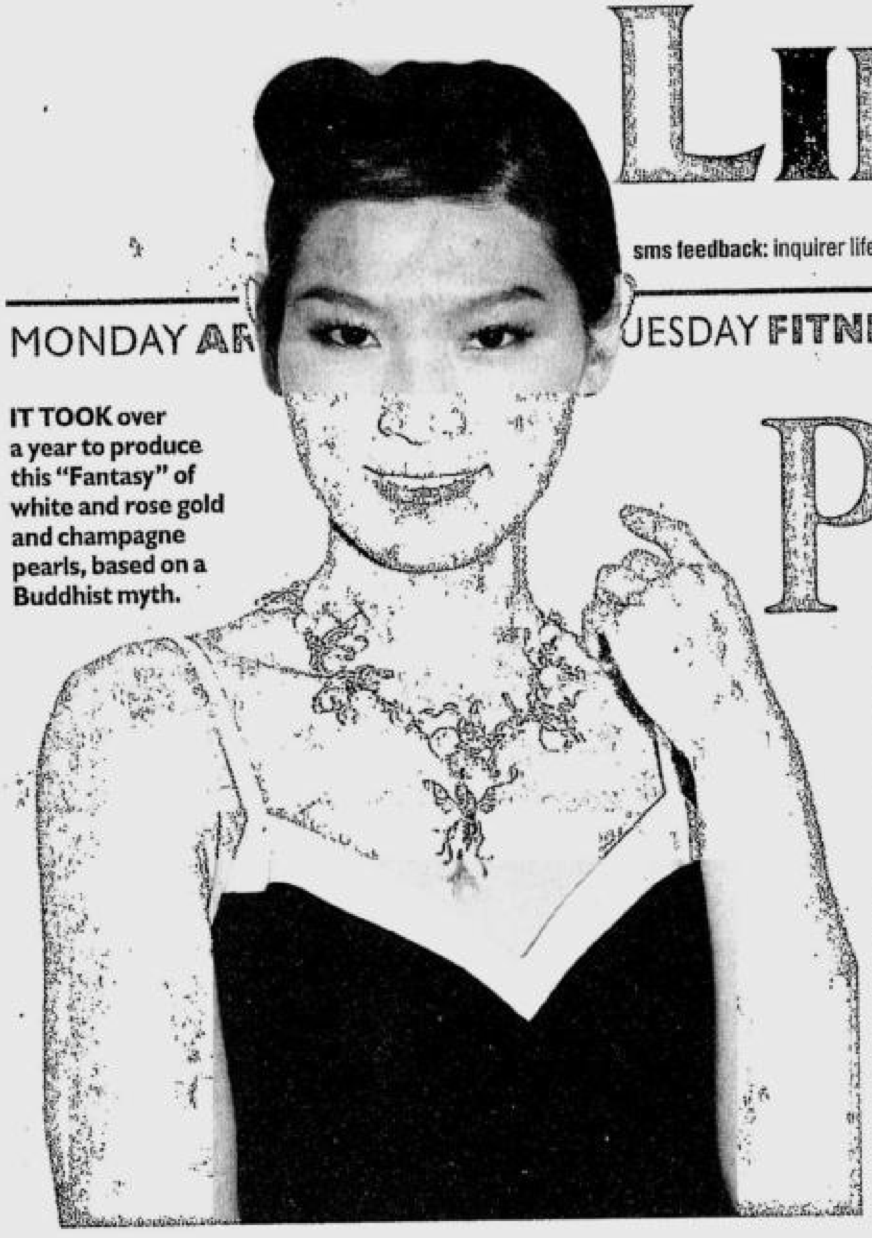

IT TOOK over a year to produce this "Fantasy" of white and rose gold and champagne pearls, based on a Buddhist myth.

Pearl drivers

By Kitty Go
Contributor

THREE FILIPINO DESIGNS stood out among 700 global jewelry design entries at the Sixth International South Sea Pearl Jewellery Design Competition held in Hong Kong.

The annual competition is organized by the South Sea Pearl Consortium, a nonprofit organization created to educate jewelry designers, retailers and consumers on the special qualities of South Sea pearls. The consortium classifies South Sea Pearls as those that range in color from white to champagne.

The awards ceremony was held at the Hong Kong Convention Center and was sponsored by the Hong Kong Trade Development Council.

Philippine design talent

Filipinos take pride in their design talent, but very few have consistently won design awards and even fewer have made a living out of design-driven jewelry. Knoi Esmane, Ivan Co and Fai Co are designers at Hoseki Jewelry Art (The Podium and SM Mall of Asia), a fine jewelry house that has been in business since 1996 and has consistently

PEARL/ C4

"SARIMANOK," Fai Co's jewelry art, has been shown worldwide alongside international design names like Tiffany, Stephen Webster and David Yurman.

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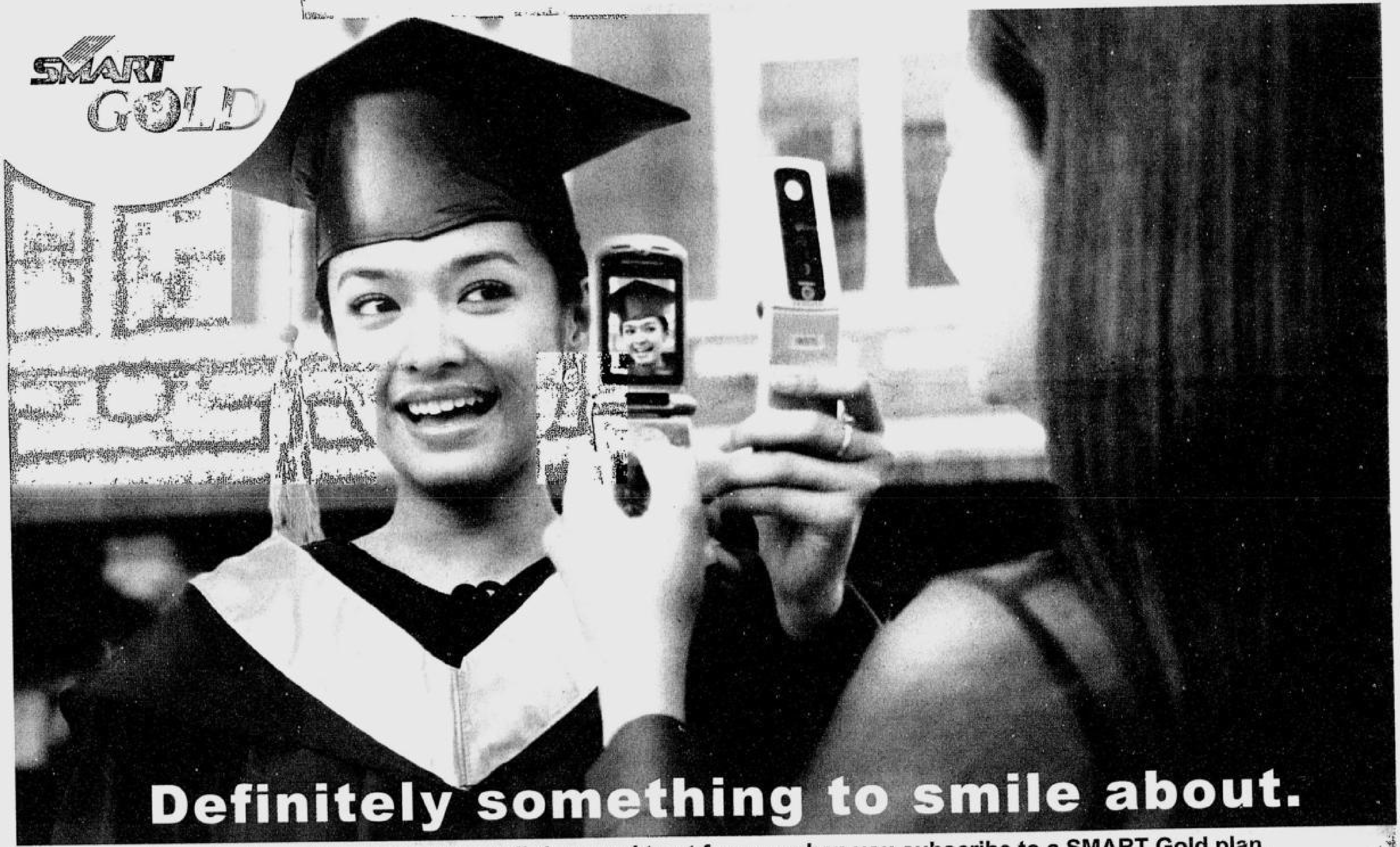

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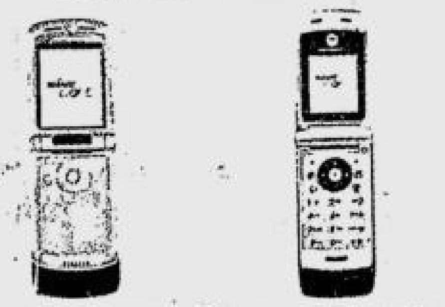

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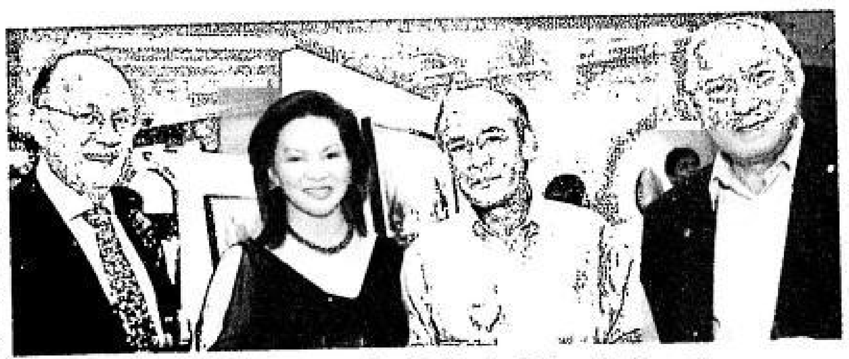
PEPPER Teehankee with Philippine Tatler publisher Irene Martel-Francisco and editor in chief Anton San Diego


PAQUI Ortigas, Sandy and Manoling Poblador, Paing Hechanova

BINGO Braganza, Dindin Monserrat, Joey Laurente and Tess Zulueta of KLM

ANNIE Sarthou, Josine Elizalde, Inno Sotto and Vicki Belo

The brothers Van Hagen

MYRZA Sison, Leah Puyat and Anton Barretto

VICTORIA Preysler-Tuason, Cecille Reynosos and Alejandro Padilla

NIKKI Prieto-Teodoro, with the only personality photo included in the exhibit

SUPER PALS: *Moi*, Ben Chan of Bench and Miguel Pastor

HAN Van Hagen with Netherlands Ambassador to the Philippines H. E. Robert Vornis, Jullie Yap-Daza, National Artist Ben Cabrera and Alex Van Hagen

PHOTOS BY DINDO GUTIERREZ

COSMOPOLITAN *MANILLE*'S SOCIAL elite and art lovers came out in full force to celebrate and be part of Dutch art at its finest, when popular ace photographer **Alex Van Hagen** and his brother, top etching artist **Han Van Hagen**, held a joint exhibit, dubbed "Van Hagen & Van Hagen: Brothers in Art," *palanggas*.

Held at the mezzanine of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel, the highly successful exhibit was superbly laid out by top architect and interior designer **Anton Mendoza**. It showcased a double Dutch serving of spectacular art featuring striking photographs by Alex and absolutely exquisite copper etchings by Han, a top etching artist in Europe no less, dahlings.

Chi-chi art lovers toured around the exhibit. They were treated to canapes and overflowing fine wine, thanks to Makati Shangri-La Hotel and Philippine Tatler, *naturellement*.

The ribbon-snipping ceremonies got the art show on a roll. Hotshot guests of honor were the Netherlands Ambassador to the Philippines **Robert Vornis**; media icon **Jullie Yap-Daza** (who by the way gave Alex his first job in the Philippines); and National Artists **Ben Cabrera** and **Arturo Luz** , who inspected the etchings of Han V. H. with a magnifying glass. The latter couldn't say enough of how he was absolutely impressed with the fine art work as well as Alex's black-and-white photos.

Other guests included master artist **Juvenal Sanso** and Dutch Embassy cultural attaché **Paula Schindeler**.

Prominent members of the Dutch community in Manila were present.

One couldn't miss *alta-sociedad* personalities **Kit Zobel** and **Maricris Zobel**; **Mary Prieto**; lawyer **Liza Marcos**; **Bonito Singson**; our *palanggas*, **Dennis Valdes** and **Tessa Prieto Vales**; **Francisco Ortigas**; **Cecille Reynoso** and husband **Jackie Atienza**; **Linda Panlilio**, **Mary Lou Lovina**, **Minnie Jentes**, **Marielle Santos**, **Victoria Preysler-Tuason**, **Patricia Panlilio**, **Gina Campos**; **Nonie** and **Bert Basilio**; author **Tonette Martel**; gourmand personality of Sigalit Kitchen, **Sigalit Djemal**; **Ed** and **Menchu Soriano**; **Lizette Cojuangco**, **Linda Legaspi-Rosal**, **Monette Guevarra** and daughter; Honorary Consul to Ukraine **Annet Ablan**; Shu Uemura's **Tessa Dragon**; and eye-catcher celebrity cosmetic surgeon, Dr. **Vicki Belo**.

Also present were Lifestyle's top gals: Philippine Star's **Millet Mananquil**, INQUIRER's **Chelo Banal-Formoso**, and Bulletin's **Ethel Timbol**.

Also enjoying the exhibit were **Donnie Ramirez**, fab photographer **Wig Tysmans**; TV's **Kim Atienza** and his wife, stylish **Fely A.**; **Nena Tantoco** of the Rustan's Group, with **Donnie Tantoco**, **Gigi Mabanta** and **Rhoda Campos-Aldanese**; and **Joy Wassmer** of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

Real Life Foundation, which was the beneficiary of the happening, was represented by Dr. **Joey Castro** and **David Bonifacio**, dahlings.

Representing the corporate world that graciously sponsored the event were KLM's top personalities—commercial manager **Joey Laurente**, marketing manager **Bingo Braganza**, marketing person, workasonic **Tess Zulueta**, and corporate sales officer, the cyber-smart **Dindin Monserrat**; **Ben Chan** of the renowned Bench fashion house; **Maite Gallego**, managing director of world-class ING Private Banking; divinely adorable **Divine Lee** of GA Sky Suites; brilliant **Patrick Reyno** of Manila Jockey Club, Inc.; **Irene Martel-Francisco** of Philippine Tatler; **Mari Lagdameo** of the popular Dream 106.7; vivacious **Judith Marie Dayrit**; and **Anton Corro** of MasterCard, Smart Infinity, and Samsung.

The dual exhibit was a first for the Van Hagen brothers. It offered guests an exciting glimpse into the duo's creativity and passion for the arts.

Ambassador Vornis thanked the Dutch brothers for sharing their art with the Philippines, describing them as "remarkable."

Han gave a brief candid talk on Alex and his art.

As a top Manila society photographer, Alex captures the images and ambience of glamorous events.

In the exhibit however, Alex turned his lenses away from famous personalities and events, to feature what he adores most: beautiful landscapes, still-lifes and nature at its best. The images were captured from his travels in Europe and the Philippines, *palanggas*.

Supported by his attractive wife **Lia**, who's also an accomplished artist herself, Han Van Hagen showed everyone why he is one of Europe's contemporary masters of copper etching.

One of the founders of The Etch-club of The Hague, Han, who was educated at the prestigious Royal Academy for the Arts and Design in The Hague, showcased exquisitely detailed, almost photographic, copper etchings of diverse subjects such as birds, sheep, cows and bulls, landscapes, and architecture.

So impressive were the collections of the brothers, dahlings, that by evening's end, practically all the items on exhibit had been sold.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** using **Kodak** EasyShare system

KIT Zobel

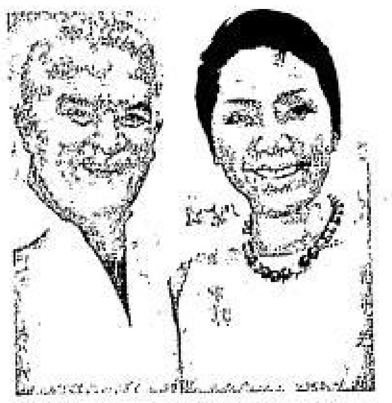
DAVID Bonifacio

LIA Van Hagen

DR. Joey Castro of Real Life Foundation

CONGRESSMAN Gilbert Teodoro

JUDITH Marie Dayrit of MasterCard


VACATIONING from Madrid Mario Borao and Minnie Jentes

ART lovers Ching and Philip Cruz

JUVENAL Sanso and Arturo Luz

MARY Ann Ansaldo with her husband, Ambassador Chuching Tambunting

ANTON Corro of MasterCard and Charlie Carmona

PAULA Schindeler, Cultural Attache of the Dutch Embassy, and Daniel Roos

TIN Tin Bersola-Babao and Julius Babao

GIGI Mabanta of Rustan's Fashion Group with Resty Vergara

RICARDO Po and Tricia Panlilio

FELY Atienza with Sevrine Miaihle

SINAI and Sigalit Djemal

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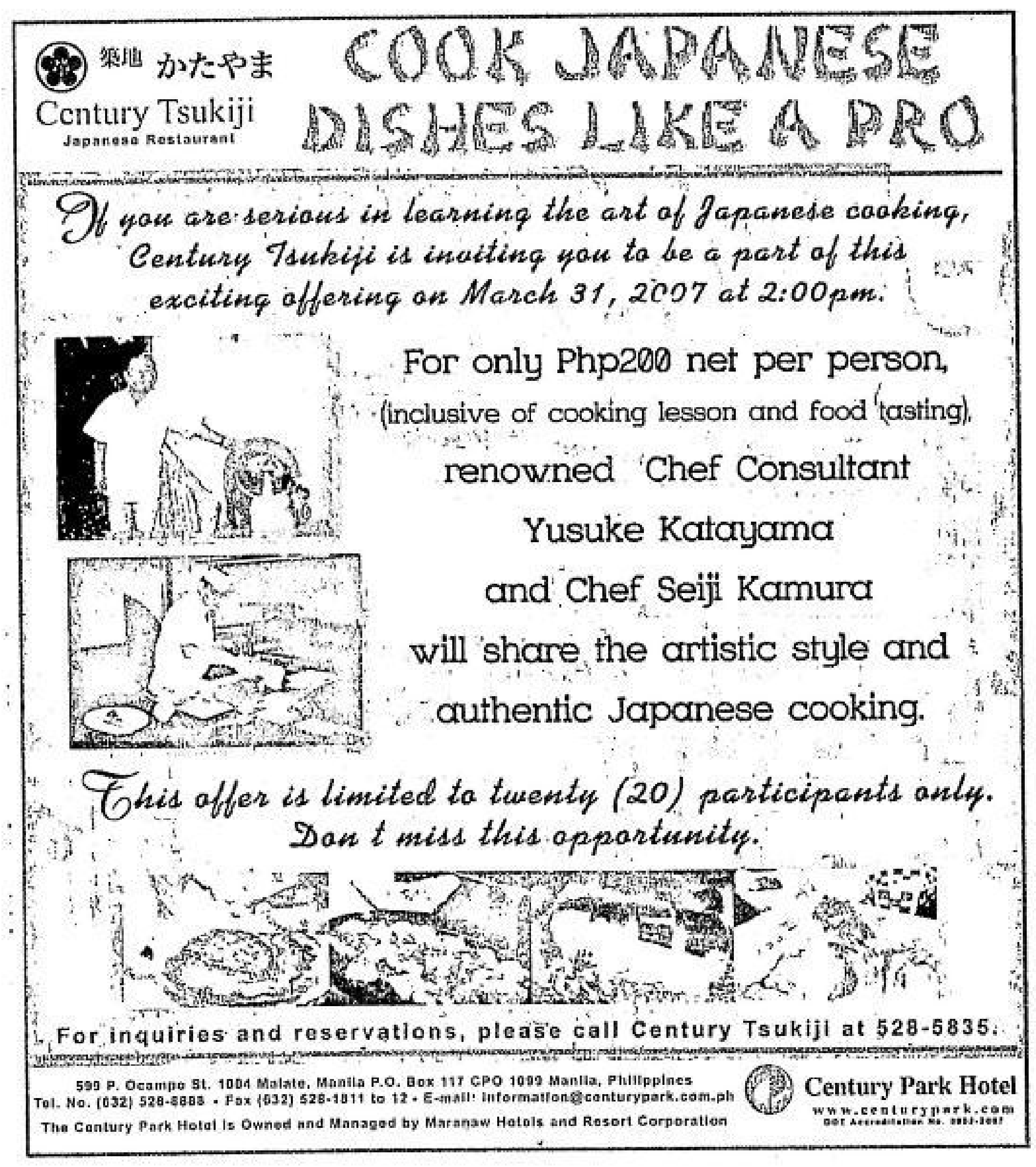

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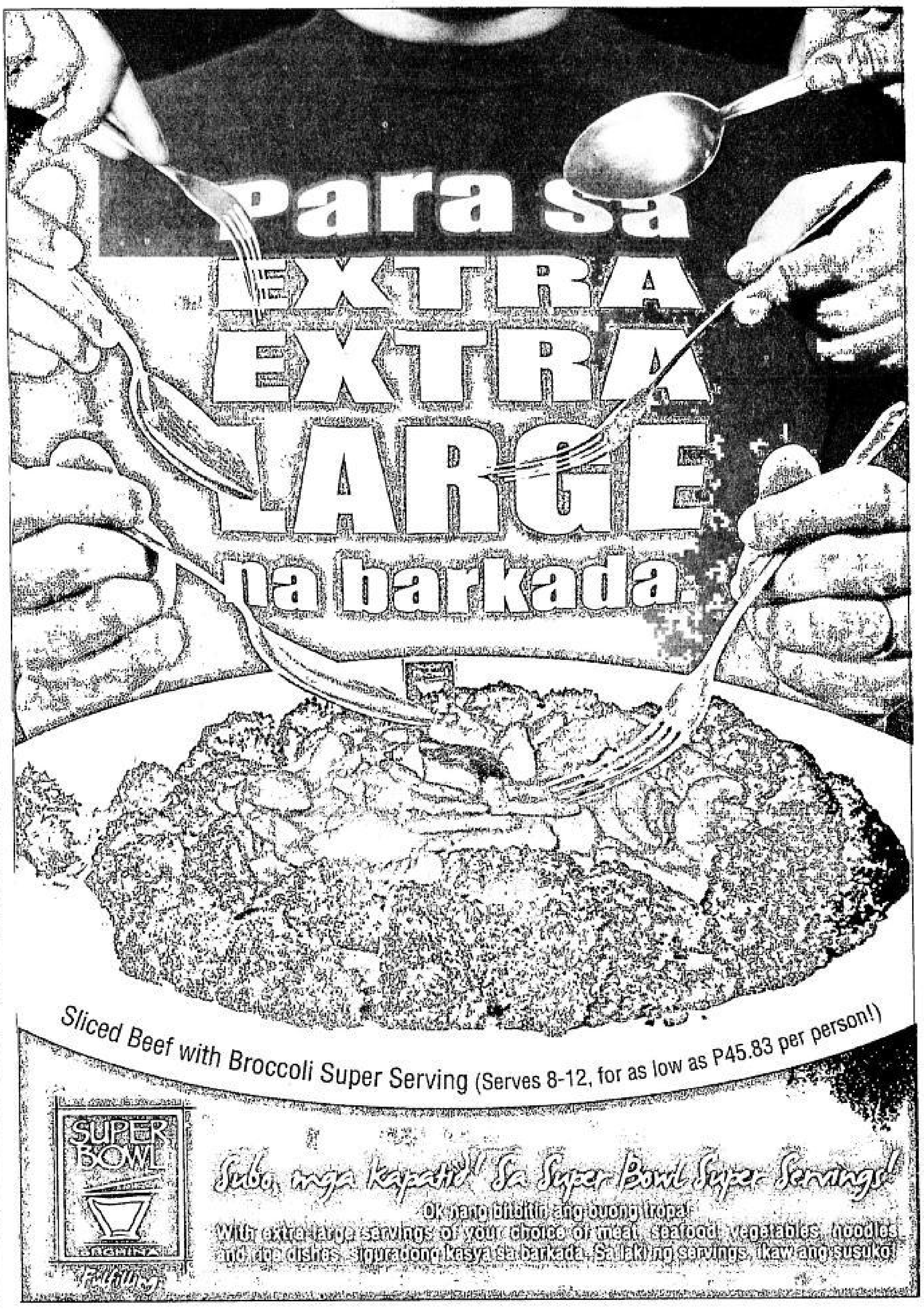

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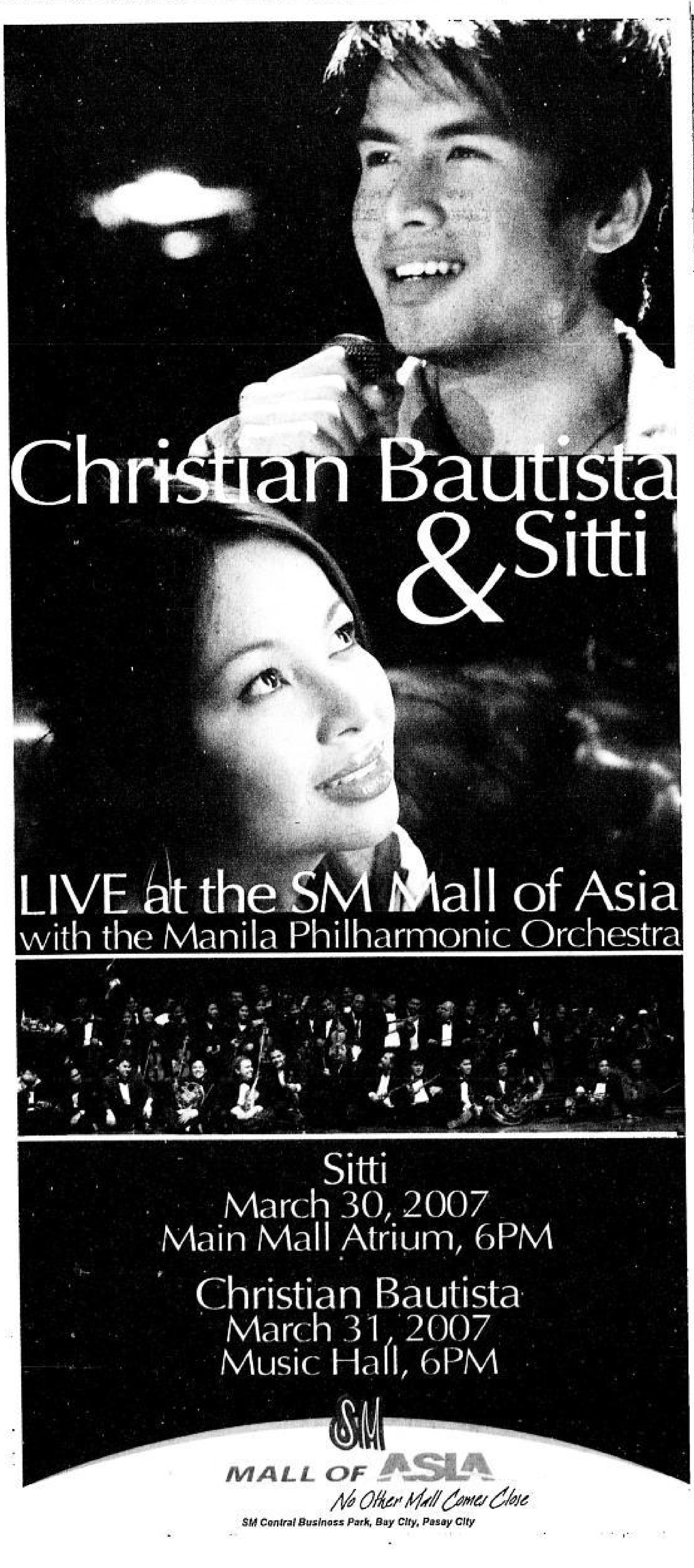

Christian Bautista
& Sitti

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Sitti
March 30, 2007
Main Mall Atrium, 6PM

Christian Bautista
March 31, 2007
Music Hall, 6PM

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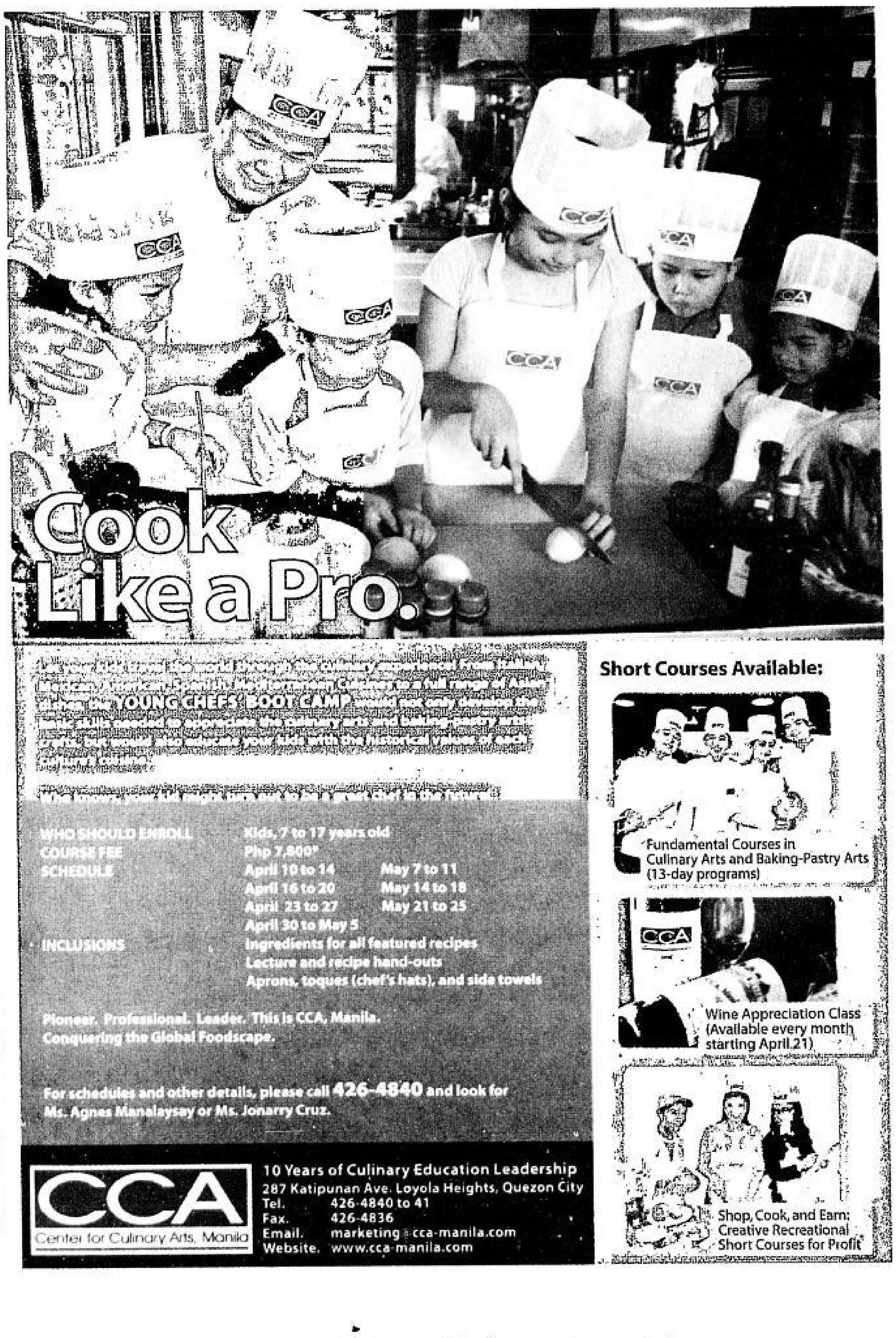

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MAY the Force be with you: A second runner-up design by St. Benilde Multimedia Studies student Ivan S. Co blends nature and metals with the use of South Sea Pearls, *kamagong*, silver and gold.

Pearl drivers

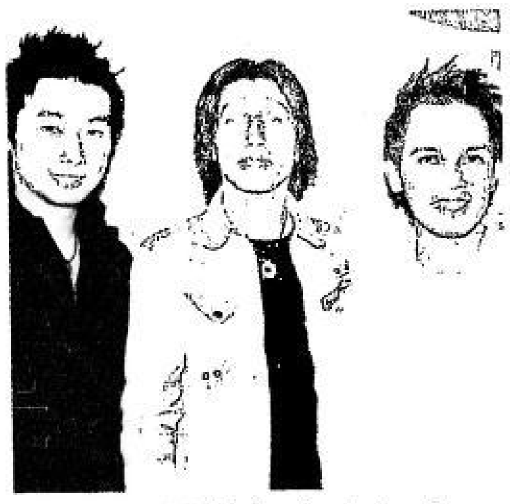
From page C1

been winning South Sea Pearl design competitions since 1998. Hoseki means "precious jewel" in Japanese.

Esmane considers Hoseki owner and head designer Co his mentor. His "Phoenix Rising" garnered a bronze under the "Others" category, a division that encompasses nontraditional jewelry pieces such as the other winning entries of a hand Henna piece from Turkey and a shoulder and chest piece from Hong Kong.

Esmane's piece is what fashion industry lingo would classify as having "no hanger appeal," meaning it doesn't look good until you put it on. The dramatic piece, which took five months to make, is a choker of gold and oxidized sterling silver sprinkled with diamonds.

Suspended from this choker are eight pieces of baroque pearls. Peacock feathers anchor both ends of the choker while a trail of burgundy ostrich feathers curve around the torso ending in a gold pendant and three more dangling baroque pearls.



THREE OUT OF 700. Jewelry design winners from the Philippines Ivan S. Co, Fai Co and Knoi Esmane of Hoseki beat out 700 international entries.

"FANTASY" of white and rose gold and champagne pearls

Ivan Co is Fai's son and was second runner-up for the student category. Part of the prize is a nine-week course in jewelry design at the Gemology Institute of America (HK). Although his style is very different from his father's, he is clearly his father's son. Barely out of the College of St. Benilde, he already works for his dad as a designer and digital artist. His entry "Force Bangle" took four months to develop and is part of the streamlined and minimalist Uber collection that Hoseki targets to young men. The bangle is a futuristic design of four South Sea *siopao*/button-shape pearls on a setting of sterling silver, 14k gold and *kamagong* wood.

The believer

Owner and head designer Fai Co won a bronze award for his work "Fantasy" in the "Necklace and Pendant" category. Trained as an architect but raised in a family of pearl traders (today they own their own farms that supply pearls internationally and to their own shops), the senior Co is an active member of the Guild of Philippine Jewellers. He has not only won the South Sea Pearl Design competition three times but has had the honor of being one of 17 worldwide designers to be included in "White Magic," a 2005 exhibition organized by The South Sea Pearl Consortium. The exhibit, which has an accompanying book, traveled to New York (Cooper-Hewitt Museum), Dubai, Moscow, London (Royal Opera House), Milan, Nagoya, Sydney, Shanghai and Hong Kong.

"Sarimanok," his dramatic necklace of gold, mother-of-pearl and teardrop baroques, was exhibited next to works by top names such as Tiffany, Henry Dunay, Stephen Webster, David Yurman.

"Fantasy," this year's labor of love, actually took a year and a half to make. The development of the design involved even more years than Co cares to remember. Inspired by the Buddhist myth of the seven goddesses, the necklace has seven intricately and individually carved fairies (no two have the same face!) of white and rose gold and 14 champagne-colored pearls from 10-12 mm.

Co is a staunch supporter of local design talent and jewelry as art and has had his share of criticism from more commercial and stone-driven jewelry retailers (those who base jewelry prices on intrinsic value of stones and gold settings) of the local Guild.

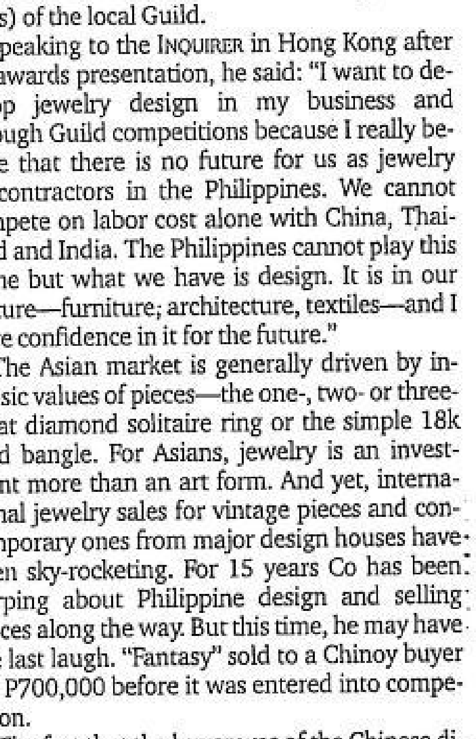
Speaking to the INQUIRER in Hong Kong after his awards presentation, he said: "I want to develop jewelry design in my business and through Guild competitions because I really believe that there is no future for us as jewelry subcontractors in the Philippines. We cannot compete on labor cost alone with China, Thailand and India. The Philippines cannot play this game but what we have is design. It is in our culture—furniture; architecture, textiles—and I have confidence in it for the future."

The Asian market is generally driven by intrinsic values of pieces—the one-, two- or three-carat diamond solitaire ring or the simple 18k gold bangle. For Asians, jewelry is an investment more than an art form. And yet, international jewelry sales for vintage pieces and contemporary ones from major design houses have been sky-rocketing. For 15 years Co has been harping about Philippine design and selling pieces along the way. But this time, he may have the last laugh. "Fantasy" sold to a Chinoy buyer for P700,000 before it was entered into competition.

The fact that the buyer was of the Chinese diaspora, known more for their value judgments than aesthetics, is an even bigger surprise (or in this case, also a financial plus).

"The customer is changing," explains Co. "They are buying art, particularly sculpture and painting. This customer will increase in number. The person who bought this piece or who will buy such a piece would already have been an art collector. For him there is no need to explain values. Pinoys are really artistic and anyone who lives here is influenced by that."

E-mail the author at kittygo_pdi@yahoo.com



A MIX of textures: Knoi Esmane's "Phoenix Rising" is an unusual piece that irreverently combines precious gems like diamonds and pearls with the polish of gold, the roughness of oxidized silver, and the softness of peacock and ostrich feathers.

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Gain® Plus ADVANCE®
Growing-Up Milk
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70
Abbott
A Promise for Life

ISABEL Oli

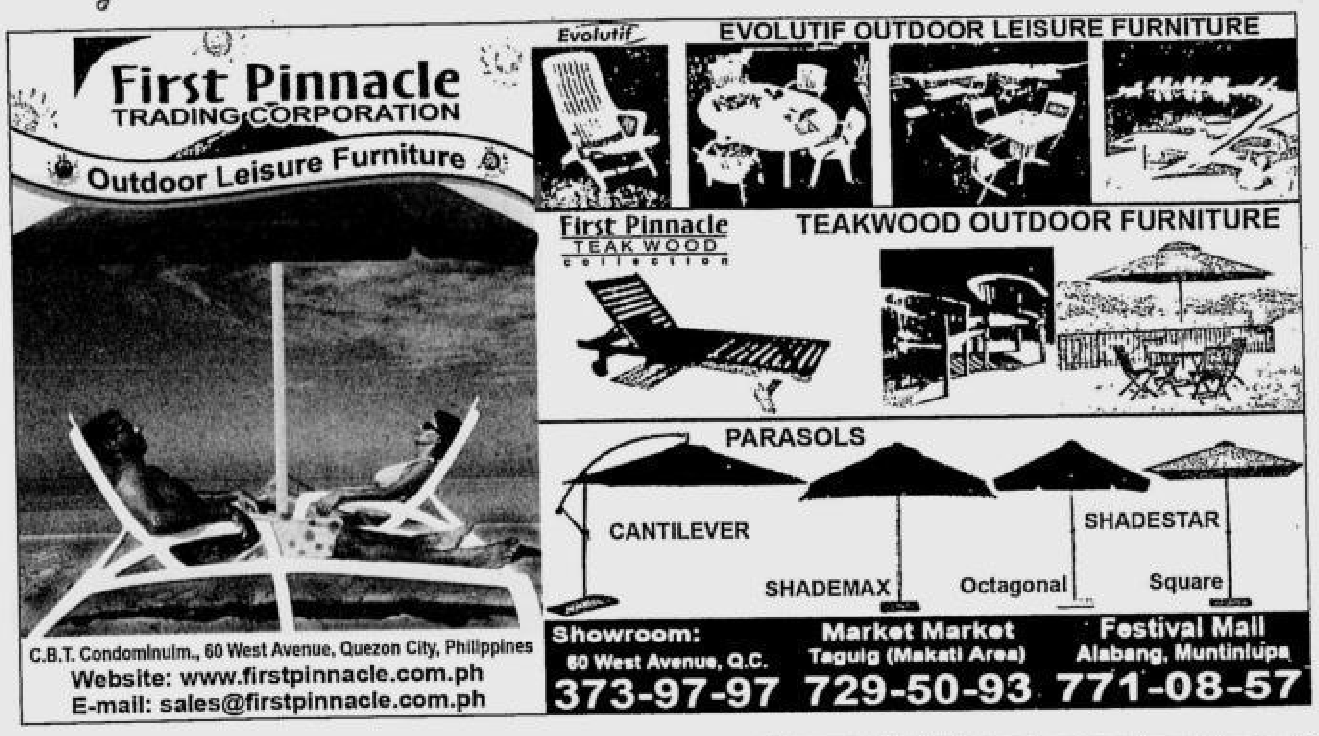
Good golly Miss Oli

IT IS A COOL SUMMER FOR Cinderella, one of the country's pioneer fashion retailers, as it launches actress Isabel Oli as its image model for its summer collections.

A model before she joined show business, Oli says she is honored to have been selected since it was for Cinderella that she first modeled for a fashion shoot. She recently landed a big role in "Atlantika," GMA's latest hit.

"She's fashionable, full of energy and wholesome. She fits the Cinderella image," says marketing director Malou de Venecia.

Among Cinderella's big brands are Esprit, U2, British India, NafNaf, Rampage, Clark's, Pierre Cardin, Seventeen, CWomen, Osh Kosh B'Gosh, and CKids.



First Pinnacle
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Outdoor Leisure Furniture

C.B.T. Condominuim., 60 West Avenue, Quezon City, Philippines
Website: www.firstpinnacle.com.ph
E-mail: sales@firstpinnacle.com.ph

Evolutif
EVOLUTIF OUTDOOR LEISURE FURNITURE

First Pinnacle
TEAK WOOD
collection
TEAKWOOD OUTDOOR FURNITURE

PARASOLS
CANTILEVER
SHADEMAX
Octagonal
SHADESTAR
Square

Showroom:
60 West Avenue, Q.C.
373-97-97

Market Market
Taguig (Makati Area)
729-50-93

Festival Mall
Alabang, Muntinlupa
771-08-57

You make meal times completely satisfying.

Every RED MEAL DEAL by Red Ribbon
comes with a drink and dessert - a delectable slice of cake.
So it's sure to satisfy your craving for great meals and good value.

Pan-grilled Chops
Salisbury Steak
Savory Tocino
Creamy Carbonara
Cheesy Lasagna
Palabok

It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon

Whether it's breakfast, lunch or dinner...

Red ribbon red meal *deal*

For many years, Red Ribbon has been a favorite of Filipinos. When it comes to cakes, ensaimadas, and even palabok, Red Ribbon is always top-of-mind. And it's no surprise since the bakeshop has always stood for great tasting cakes, breads and pastries.

While its reliability has earned the trust of many, Red Ribbon continues to make improvements in its products and services. In fact, its new ad campaign, "Whatever the celebration, It's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon," is a testament to its commitment in making every celebration even more beautiful with Red Ribbon cakes that taste as delicious as they look. The new campaign also ushers in a new look which can be seen in the updated, more contemporary design of the Red Ribbon logo.

In addition to its cakes, breads & pastries, Red Ribbon also offers Red Meal Deals, delicious combos of Red Ribbon's all-time favorite fares. Now you can enjoy your favorite dishes complete with a drink and a slice of cake. No other combo meal comes with a dessert this delicious. There are 11 meals to choose from: Palabok, Meaty Dinuguan, Spaghetti, Cheesy Lasagna, Creamy Carbonara, Pan Grilled Chop, Savory Tocino, Salisubry Steak, Classic Caldereta, Homestyle Fried Chicken, and Daing na Bangus. These filling meals come with any of Red Ribbon's mouth-watering cakes. You get so much more than what you pay for. The Red Meal Deals are definitely a steal.

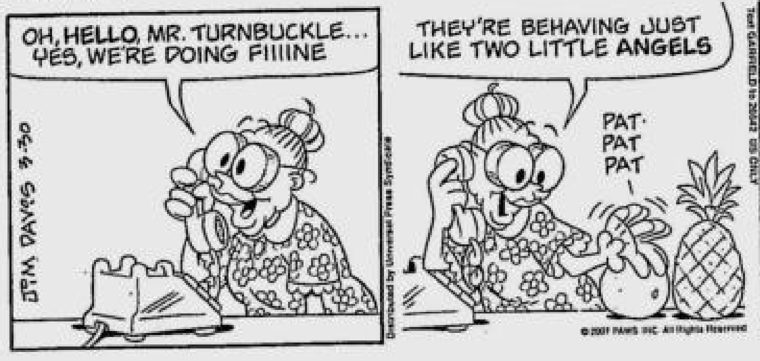
For parties, cakes aren't the only things you can get from Red Ribbon. With Platters-to-Go, you can order bulk noodles or pasta dishes for any celebration with family or party with friends. Platters-to-Go uses the best ingredients and is packaged in reusable, hygienic containers. Aside from the great taste, it's also very convenient. Platters-to-Go can be ordered and delivered on the day of the event. You can have an instant party without worrying about the food! Platters-to-Go are available in Palabok, Spaghetti, Creamy Carbonara, and Cheesy Lasagna in sizes to suit any celebration: Family (4 to 6 servings), Potluck (6 to 9 servings), and Party (8 to 12 servings).

Through the years, Red Ribbon has built a reputation for the best-tasting cakes, breads, and pastries. Plus its Red Meal Deals and Platters-to-Go provide great meals with great value that live up to the Red Ribbon name. You can be assured of quality and great taste only from Red Ribbon.

Indeed, whatever the celebration, it's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon.

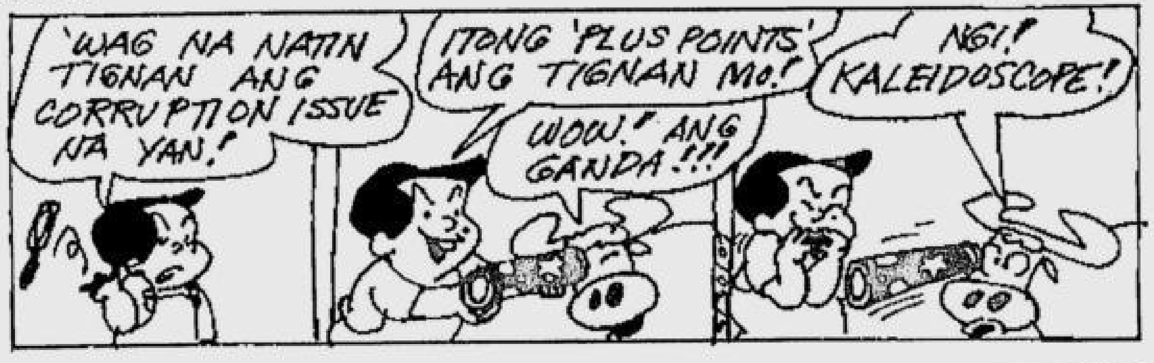
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


OH, HELLO, MR. TURNBUCKLE... YES, WE'RE DOING FIIIINE
JIM DAVIS 3-30
THEY'RE BEHAVING JUST LIKE TWO LITTLE ANGELS
PAT PAT PAT
WELL?
I MUST HAVE DIALED A WRONG NUMBER

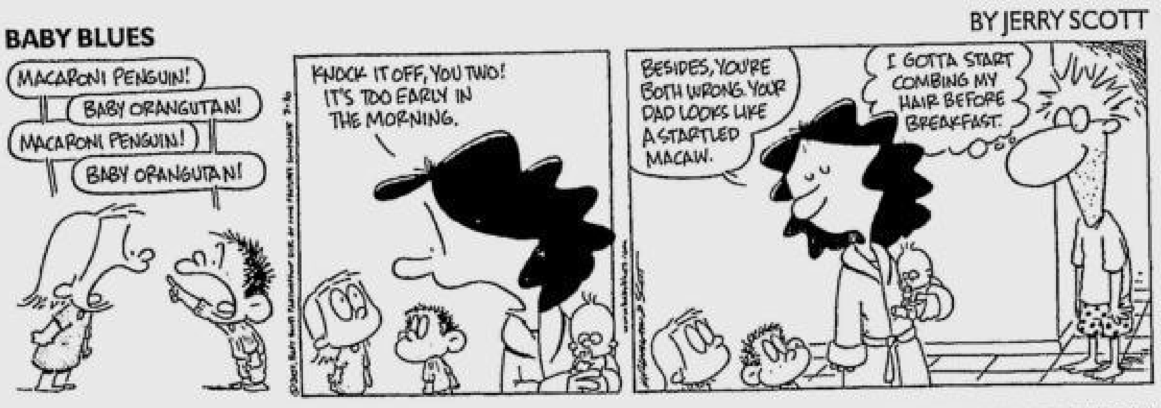
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


'WAG NA NATIN TIGNAN ANG CORRUPTION ISSUE NA YAN!
ITONG 'PLUS POINTS' ANG TIGNAN MO!
WOW! ANG GANDA!!!
NGI! KALEIDOSCOPE!

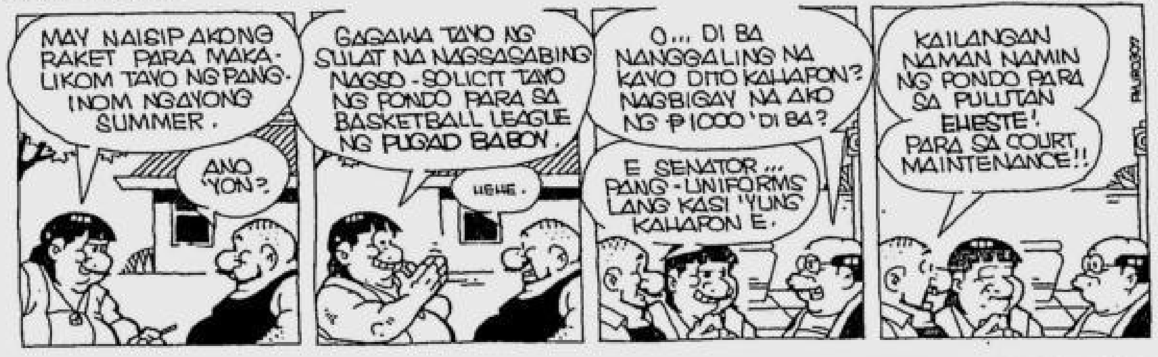
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MACARONI PENGUIN!
BABY ORANGUTAN!
MACARONI PENGUIN!
BABY ORANGUTAN!
KNOCK IT OFF, YOU TWO! IT'S TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING.
BESIDES, YOU'RE BOTH WRONG. YOUR DAD LOOKS LIKE A STARTLED MACAW.
I GOTTA START COMBING MY HAIR BEFORE BREAKFAST.

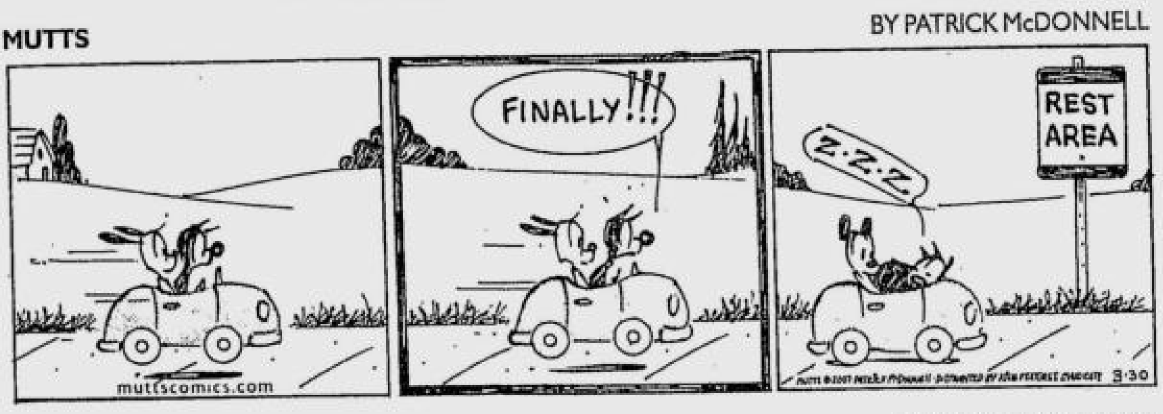
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


MAY NAISIP AKONG RAKET PARA MAKA-LIKOM TAYO NG PANG-INOM NGAYONG SUMMER.
ANO 'YON?
GAGAWA TAYO NG SULAT NA NAGSASABING NAGSO-SOLICIT TAYO NG PONDO PARA SA BASKETBALL LEAGUE NG PUGAD BABOY.
HEHE.
O... DI BA NANGGALING NA KAYO DITO KAHAPON? NAGBIGAY NA AKO NG ₱1000 'DI BA?
E SENATOR... PANG-UNIFORMS LANG KASI 'YUNG KAHAPON E.
KAILANGAN NAMAN NAMIN NG PONDO PARA SA PULUTAN EHESTE! PARA SA COURT MAINTENANCE!!

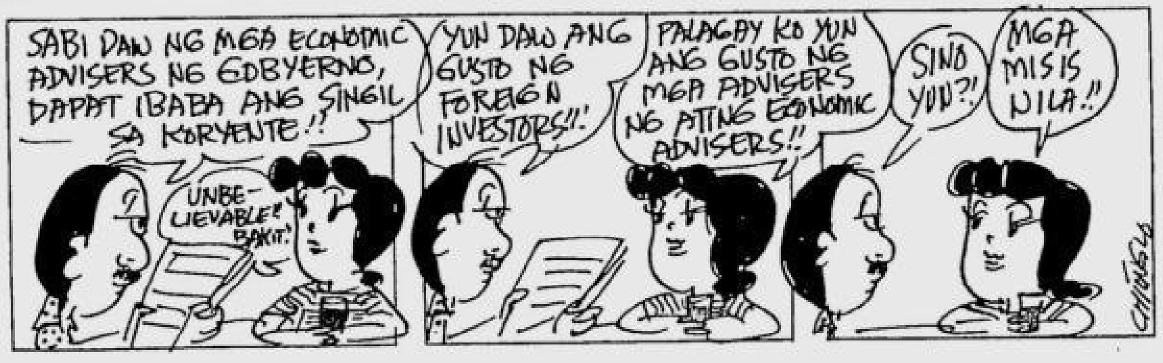
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


muttscomics.com
FINALLY!!!
REST AREA
Z·Z·Z
3·30

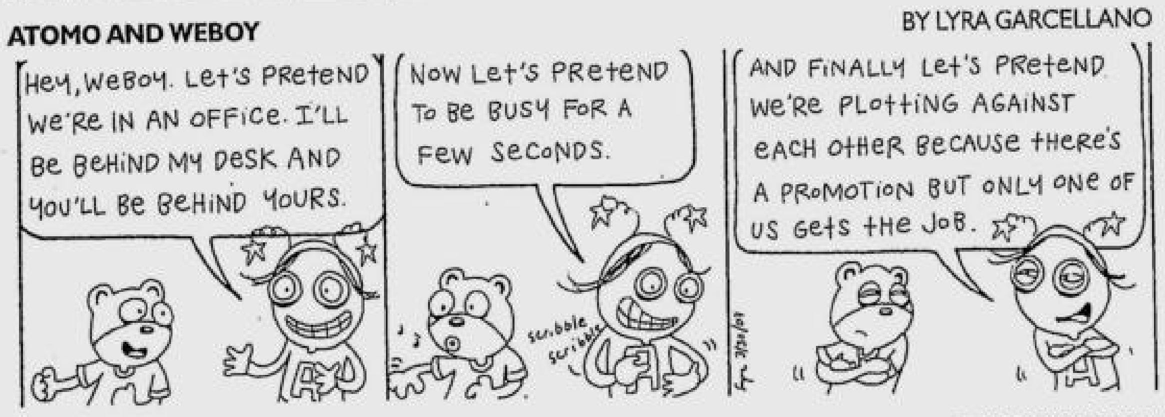
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


SABI DAW NG MGA ECONOMIC ADVISERS NG GOBYERNO, DAPAT IBABA ANG SINGIL SA KORYENTE!!
UNBE-LIEVABLE! BAKIT?
YUN DAW ANG GUSTO NG FOREIGN INVESTORS!!
PALAGAY KO YUN ANG GUSTO NG MGA ADVISERS NG ATING ECONOMIC ADVISERS!!
SINO YUN?!
MGA MISIS NILA!!
CHIONGLO

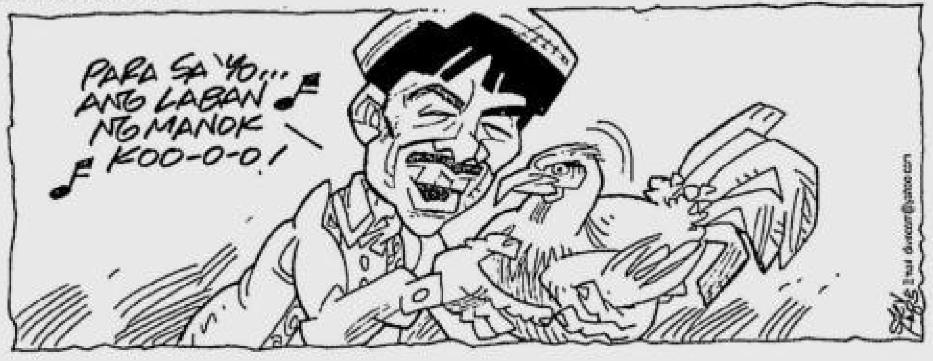
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, Weboy. Let's Pretend We're IN AN OFFICE. I'LL Be BeHIND MY DeSK AND YOU'LL Be BeHIND YOURS.
Now Let's Pretend To Be BUSY FOR A Few Seconds.
scribble scribble
AND FINALLY Let's Pretend We're PLotting AGAINST each other Because there's A PROMOTION BUT ONLY ONe OF US Gets the JoB.

DIVINE COMEDY

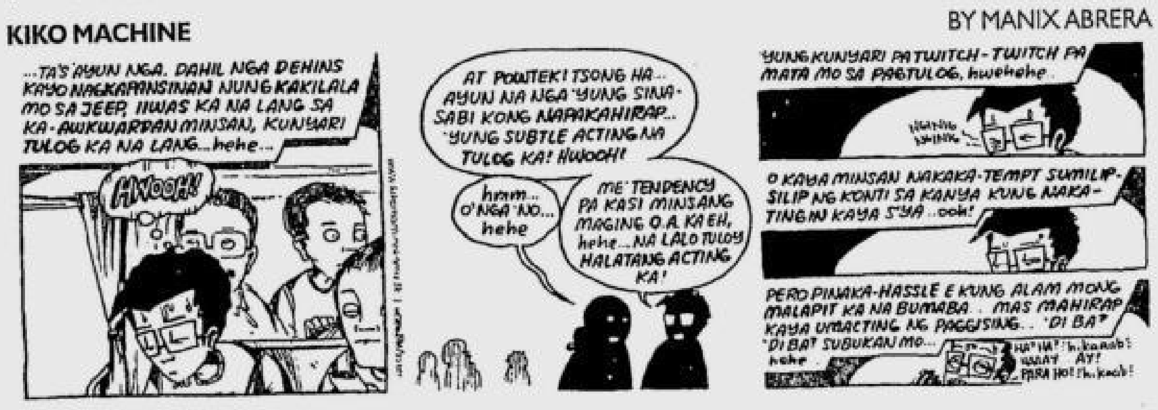
BY STEVEN PABALINAS


PARA SA 'YO... ANG LABAN NG MANOK KOO-O-O!

ANG TOTOONG SPORT NA FIRST-LOVE NI CONGRESSMAN PACQUIAO

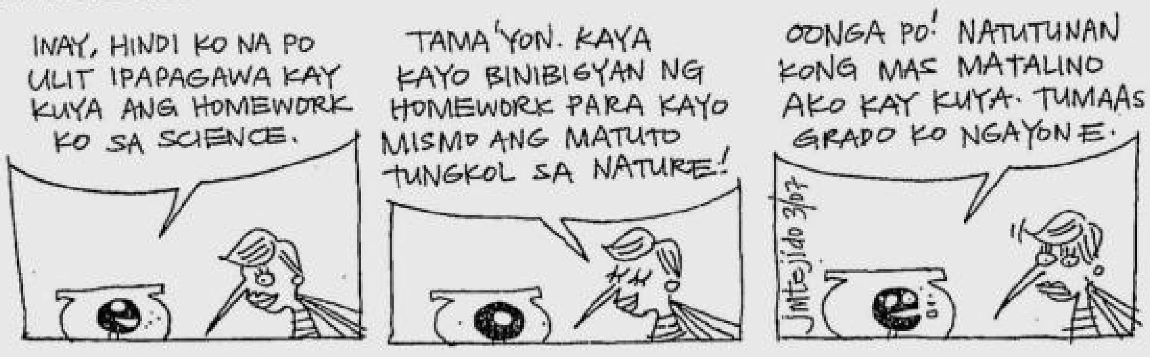
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


...TA'S AYUN NGA. DAHIL NGA DEHINS KAYO NAGKAPANSINAN NUNG KAKILALA MO SA JEEP, IIWAS KA NA LANG SA KA-AWKWARDAN MINSAN, KUNYARI TULOG KA NA LANG...hehe...
HWOOH!
AT POWTEK! TSONG HA... AYUN NA NGA 'YUNG SINA-SABI KONG NAPAKAHIRAP... 'YUNG SUBTLE ACTING NA TULOG KA! HWOOH!
hmm.. O'NGA 'NO... hehe
ME TENDENCY PA KASI MINSANG MAGING O.A. KA EH, hehe...NA LALO TULOY HALATANG ACTING KA!
YUNG KUNYARI PATWITCH-TWITCH PA MATA MO SA PAGTULOG, hwehehe.
O KAYA MINSAN NAKAKA-TEMPT SUMILIP-SILIP NG KONTI SA KANYA KUNG NAKA-TINGIN KAYA SYA...ooh!
PERO PINAKA-HASSLE E KUNG ALAM MONG MALAPIT KA NA BUMABA.. MAS MAHIRAP KAYA UMACTING NG PAGGISING.. 'DI BA? 'DI BA? SUBUKAN MO... hehe
WAAY AY!

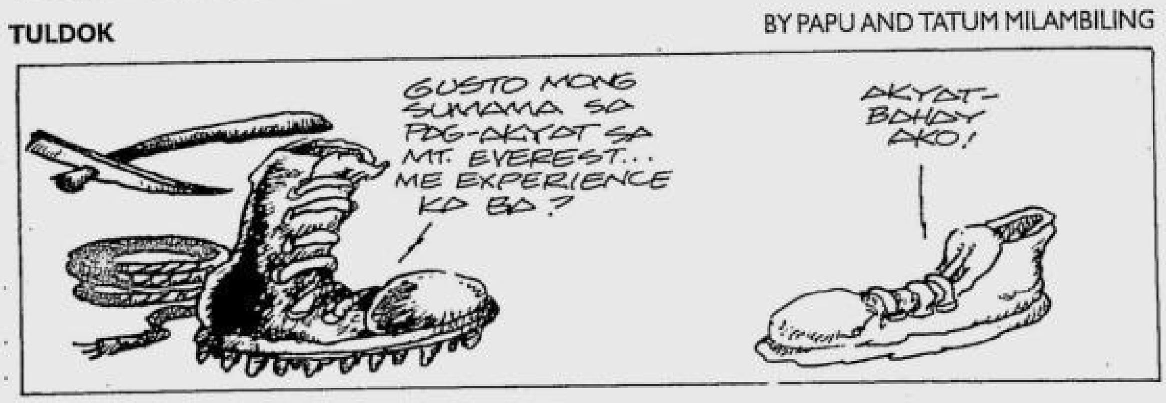
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


INAY, HINDI KO NA PO ULIT IPAPAGAWA KAY KUYA ANG HOMEWORK KO SA SCIENCE.
TAMA 'YON. KAYA KAYO BINIBIGYAN NG HOMEWORK PARA KAYO MISMO ANG MATUTO TUNGKOL SA NATURE!
OONGA PO! NATUTUNAN KONG MAS MATALINO AKO KAY KUYA. TUMAAS GRADO KO NGAYON E.
JmTejido 3/07

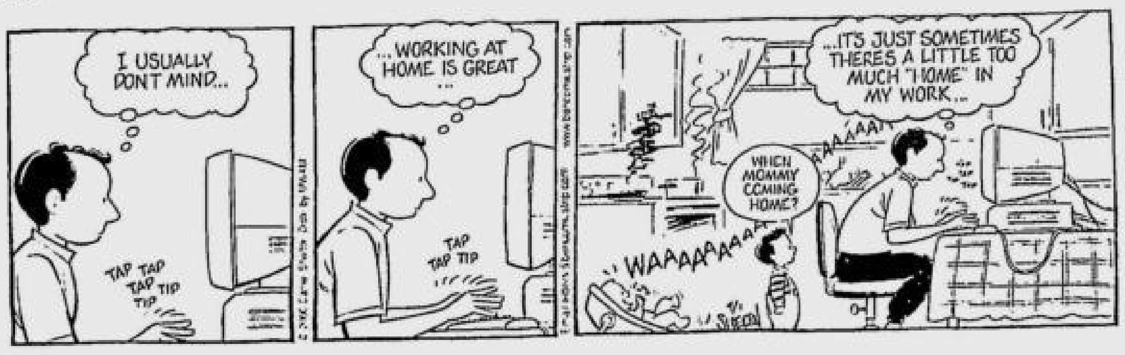
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

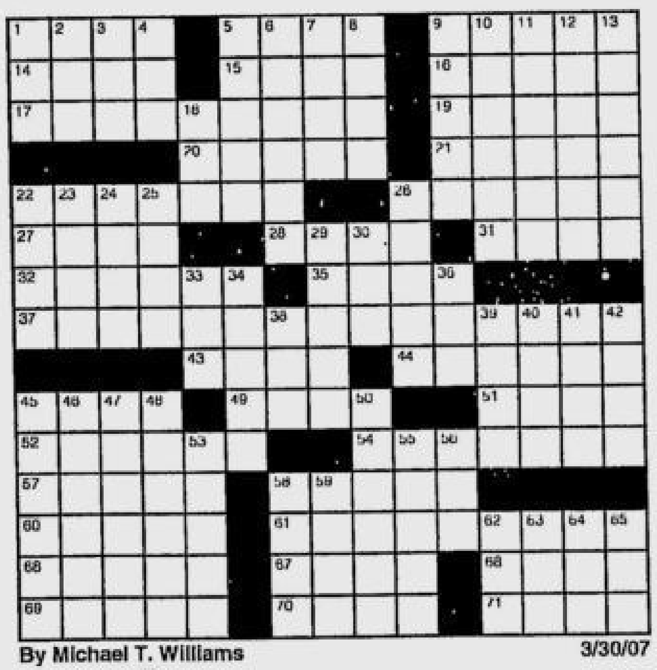

GUSTO MONG SUMAMA SA PAG-AKYAT SA MT. EVEREST... ME EXPERIENCE KA BA?
AKYAT-BAHAY AKO!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


I USUALLY DONT MIND...
TAP TAP TAP TIP TIP
...WORKING AT HOME IS GREAT...
TAP TAP TIP
...ITS JUST SOMETIMES THERES A LITTLE TOO MUCH "HOME" IN MY WORK...
WHEN MOMMY COMING HOME?
WAAAAAAAA

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Michael T. Williams
Clearwater, FL
3/30/07

ACROSS
1 1951 MVP
5 "__ Sutra"
9 Verify
14 Related (to)
15 Rehan and Huxtable
16 Eat, drink and be merry
17 1956, '57, '60, '61 and '62 MVPs
19 Actress Dunne
20 Semi-metallic element
21 "Brooklyn Bridge" artist
22 1923 MVP
26 Dee or Day O'Connor
27 Mural site
28 Tours to be
31 Hits the road
32 Christmas or Easter, e.g.
35 Mystique
37 26-time champs
43 Make well
44 Postpone sleep
45 Small vipers
49 Summoned, old-style
51 Tabula __
52 Faded to the extreme
54 1950 MVP
57 Graph starter?
58 Stage performer
60 Aussie Rod
61 1977 World Series MVP
66 Standing
67 Pumpkin or squash
68 Adorable
69 Gilbert and Teasdale
70 Meeting of Cong.
71 2005 MVP

DOWN
1 Edible tuber
2 Volga tributary
3 Cotton cleaner
4 Mich. neighbor
5 Shish __
6 Actress Renee
7 Irish county
8 Part of USTA
9 __ ballerina
10 Called back
11 Carry to excess
12 Jury pool
13 Verdugo and Firsova
18 Econ. degree
22 Jerk
23 Corned-beef dish
24 Cosmo rival
25 Snitch
26 Sikkim antelope
29 Assessed
30 Cause friction
33 AEC, today
34 Uncertainty
36 Physicians' org.
38 Gun lobby inits.
39 Ballpoint pen inventor
40 Coup d'__
41 Deception
42 Practice punching
45 Romes and pippins
46 North Africa, mostly
47 Short-billed wading bird
48 Finger Lake
50 Legally bars
53 Alphabetizes
55 Islands near Sumatra
56 Table scrap
58 Current units
59 Manitoba tribe
62 South American tuber
63 Prickly husk
64 DDE's command
65 Highest alert

Thursday's Puzzle Solved

O	P	T	S	■	A	L	B	U	M	■	G	L	I	B
B	R	A	T	■	N	O	R	S	E	■	R	I	D	E
I	O	T	A	■	O	R	I	E	L	■	A	E	O	N
E	V	E	N	K	I	N	G	S	■	O	V	U	L	E
■	■	■	D	Y	N	E	■	■	S	U	E	■	■	■
T	E	A	P	O	T	■	R	O	O	T	L	E	T	S
A	T	E	A	T	■	S	O	A	P	■	■	L	O	A
M	U	S	T	O	B	E	Y	T	H	E	L	A	W	S
E	D	O	■	■	I	N	C	H	■	N	A	T	E	S
S	E	P	A	R	A	T	E	■	L	O	N	E	L	Y
■	■	■	G	A	S	■	■	A	U	L	D	■	■	■
S	H	E	E	T	■	O	F	G	R	A	M	M	A	R
L	A	W	N	■	C	L	O	A	K	■	A	I	D	A
A	V	E	C	■	A	E	R	I	E	■	S	C	A	R
V	E	R	Y	■	N	O	E	N	D	■	S	E	R	A

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3/30/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have intense, passionate energy! You have a strong driving energy to go after whatever you pursue. Obstacles and moments of failure will not daunt you. Because of this, you are sometimes misunderstood. Quite often, you're self-taught. You have a lovely year ahead. Social occasions and warm times with others make this a very pleasant time!

Birthdate of: Eric Clapton, guitarist; Vincent van Gogh, painter; Celine Dion, singer.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): People and opportunities come easily to you now because the Sun is in your sign. Make the most of this. Milk it for all it's worth!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Make sure you get time to be by yourself. Steal a little solitude for your own peace of mind. Work alone or behind the scenes if you can. (You need this.)

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Talk to others, and share your goals and dreams for the future with them. You might be surprised to find how helpful their feedback will be to you.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): The Sun is now at high noon in your chart, acting like a spotlight on you. Because of this, others will ask you to accept increased responsibilities for something. Say yes; you can handle it!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Try to do something different from your normal routine. You want to travel or learn something new. You're hungry for adventure and new experiences!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Wrap up loose details with inheritances, insurance matters, debt and taxes. Be prepared to listen to others and learn more about where they're coming from.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): With the Sun opposite your sign now, this is the perfect opportunity for you to learn more about yourself through your closest relationships with others. Observe your behavior with partners and close friends.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Since you have the urge to get better organized in your life now, get the right tools to do a good job. Roll up your sleeves and begin.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Play, romance, fun activities with children, vacations, the arts and sports are tops on the menu for you now. Enjoy good times. Take time out for fun and pleasure.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Home, family and real estate issues are your top priority now. Family discussions are significant. Why not entertain at home as well?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Short trips, errands, buying and selling, and increased reading, writing and studying all combine to keep you busy! You've got things to do, places to go and people to see.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): You're very focused on earnings and cash flow right now. (Why is there always so much month left at the end of the money?) Relax.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

					8	4		
	3				2	5		
		4	6					
	5	9						
7	4						6	8
						3	1	
					5	7		
		6	7				2	
		8	3					

Difficulty Level ★★★★
3/30

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

5	9	2	3	4	8	1	6	7
8	3	7	2	1	6	9	4	5
1	6	4	7	5	9	2	3	8
7	4	3	1	8	5	6	9	2
9	2	8	4	6	7	5	1	3
6	1	5	9	2	3	7	8	4
2	7	1	6	3	4	8	5	9
4	8	6	5	9	2	3	7	1
3	5	9	8	7	1	4	2	6

Difficulty Level ★★★
3/29

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Sand and surf must-haves

TRIUMPH tankini with boy-leg bottom

SASSA halter-top bikini

ROBINSONS DEPARTMENT Store carries an array of swimsuit selections from Triumph and Sassa that will flatter your body.

Tankinis will give you fuller coverage, break up long torsos and lengthen your legs while allowing for subtle sexiness and comfort. Bra-style bikinis with underwire support are absolute musts for minimizing and flattering large breasts. The bandeau bikini is also hot, while triangle tops are still big favorites on the tropical runway.

If you still prefer a one-piece, then the 'monokini' or maillot is the way to go. If you have extra pounds to hide, one-piece swimsuits can make you look sleek and athletic. They are great for playing frisbee or beach volley, too.

But if you simply want to work on your tan, bathing suits with skinnier straps or tube tops are the best buys.

RDS also offers other sand and surf must-haves including flip-flops, wraps, tanning lotions, sunblock, towels, mats, sunglasses, hats, bags, beach toys and other accessories.

RDS branches are located in Robinsons Malls, Waltermart Malls, Metropolis Star and Festival Mall in Alabang; Nepo Mall Pampanga and Dagupan, Pangasinan; and Limketkai Mall, Cagayan de Oro City. Visit www.rds.com.ph.

SASSA halter-top bikini

TRIUMPH halter-top bikini (left) and swimsuit with boy-leg bottom

LIKE A FESTIVAL OF MALLS ONLY AT
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
FILINVEST-ALABANG
EASTER EXCITEMENT

Dora the Explorer Pirate Adventure Party
2/L Carousel Court
April 1, 2007
Watch Dora's Pirate Adventure Party hosted by Skycable & Nickelodeon!

Roll For the Bunnies!
2/L Carousel Court
April 8, 2007 (Easter Sunday), 11am-8pm
Try your luck at our dice game!
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MODEL-ACTRESS Avi Siwa in Frederick Peralta outfit

COSMOPOLITAN Philippines' fashionistas. Beauty editor Marielle Chua, fashion editor Katrina Dy, and editor in chief Zo Aguila

Images of fashion

FASHIONISTAS, CELEBRITIES and guests who watched the opening gala night of the Philippine Fashion Week were in for a pleasant surprise. Their photos were taken and printed by HP Printers and Supplies through HP A516 and C6180 photo printers using Vivera Inks. Not only that, they were also posted on HP's photo wall.

HP supplies category manager Mark Gordon Ong (center) with SM Supermalls marketing managers Allan Qiocho and Elia Angeles

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A beautiful partnership for a worthy cause

Beauties with Big Hearts.
Watsons Style Icon and Bb. Pilipinas-World Margaret Wilson (left) and Watsons Woman and Bb. Pilipinas-Universe Anna Theresa Licaros, who are passionate about humanitarian causes, prove that they are more than just a beautiful face.

Beautiful Partnership.
Watsons, in partnership with Bb. Pilipinas Charities, gives a new meaning to looking good, feeling great and having fun.

Watsons
your personal store
age spots
7days

Courtesy Call.
Bb. Pilipinas winners visit the Watsons outlet at SM Mall of Asia.

By Marlet D. Salazar

REAL BEAUTY COMES FROM WITHIN... AND OUTSIDE. These days, you don't have to choose between inner beauty and external beauty because one can have both. The goodness of the heart radiates in the surface.

Two of the leading forces in promoting everything beautiful did just that: allowing people to see that kindness and good looks can go together.

The largest health and personal care retail chain Watsons Philippines joined forces with Binibining Pilipinas Charities Inc. (BPCI) in support of its thrust to help the underprivileged.

While Watsons has established its name as the leading one-stop shop of beauty and health products, it does not limit its scope to outside beauty alone. With a slogan sure to captivate everyone, it aims to let people achieve a beauty like no other.

"Look good, feel great, have fun" is what Watsons wants the consumers to realize. That when you feel great about yourself, it manifests in your physical appearance and you will surely enjoy more of life.

This thrust is further reinforced in the recently concluded Binibining Pilipinas 2007.

Two of the winners were first given special Watsons award before being named Bb. Pilipinas-Universe and Bb. Pilipinas-World.

Bb. Pilipinas-Universe 2007 Anna Theresa Licaros was given the Watsons' Woman Award while Bb. Pilipinas-World Margaret Wilson was named the Watsons Style Icon.

This only proves that Watsons has the eye for total beauty.

"We are happy to be part of this year's search for Binibining Pilipinas because Watsons believes that Filipino women are among the most beautiful in the world," said Bobby Saneo, activation marketing manager of Watsons Philippines, "We at Watsons are proud that we continually help women enjoy their lives more by making a positive difference in their health, looks, and the way they feel."

Binibining Pilipinas holds a charity day every year with the candidates. For this year the beauties spent a fun-filled day with almost 100 kids from the Sisters of Charity and the Department of Social Welfare and Development. They shared fun and exciting games at Timezone Gateway and gave the kids tons of surprises and treats.

Watsons shares the ideals and vision of BPCI in trying to bring the message of hope and love among the people.

Young Filipino women who are part of the Binibining Pilipinas pageant exude the beauty that Watsons wants to communicate. While in the business of personal care and beauty, Watsons also nurtures inner beauty to people by setting an example in helping others. Since 2005, Watsons produced and carried calendars in its stores which benefits the Tahanang Walang Hagdanan. For two consecutive years since 2005, it has given P2 million from the proceeds of the sale. Watsons will once again donate proceeds from the sale of its 2007 calendars.

"Watsons is glad to be working hand in hand with the Binibining Pilipinas Charities in helping out orphans, indigent families, and other less fortunate members of society," Saneo said.

> Truly, when you speak of beauty now, it is beyond skin deep. Watsons and Binibining Pilipinas make it possible for everyone to achieve total beauty: the purity of heart with knockout looks

Already an established name in health and beauty business, Watsons assistance in BPCI hopes to further strengthen its many projects.

Since it first opened its first stores in 2002, Watsons now operates 170 stores in the Philippines in partnership with another retail giant, SM. It now has a total of 19 retail brands with over 7,600 stores in health, beauty, electronics, and general merchandise, duty-free items, and beverages including bottled water.

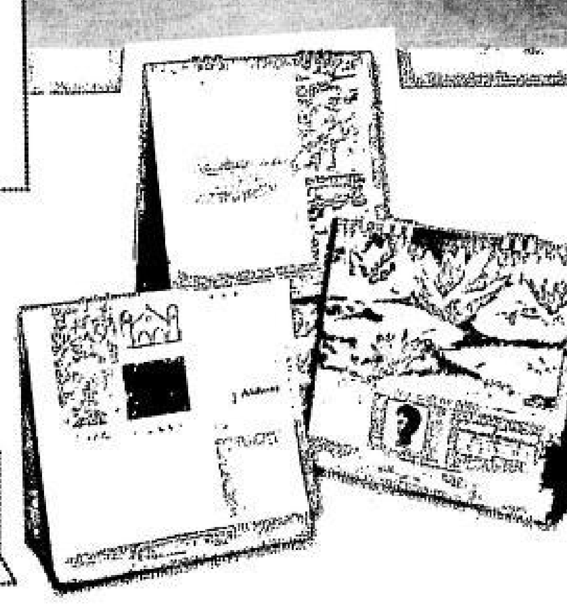
Truly, when you speak of beauty now, it is beyond skin deep. Watsons and Binibining Pilipinas make it possible for everyone to achieve total beauty: the purity of heart with knockout looks.

It's Christmastime once again.
Bb. Pilipinas beauties take time off to give joy and gifts to less fortunate children.

Strike a pose.
Looking good, feeling great and having fun treating children to TimeZone.

Beauty and the Boss.
Bb. Pilipinas winners with Watsons managing director Krish N. Iyer (center) and other Watsons executives after the pageant.

Going places with just a single step.
Watsons gives its first million-peso donation to Tahanang Walang Hagdanan.



Proceeds from the Watsons calendars go to the Tahanang Walang Hagdanan.

One Million Pesos

Pledge of love.
Watsons gives P1 M (for the second time) to the Tahanang Walang Hagdanan Foundation during the 2006 Health & Beauty Awards.

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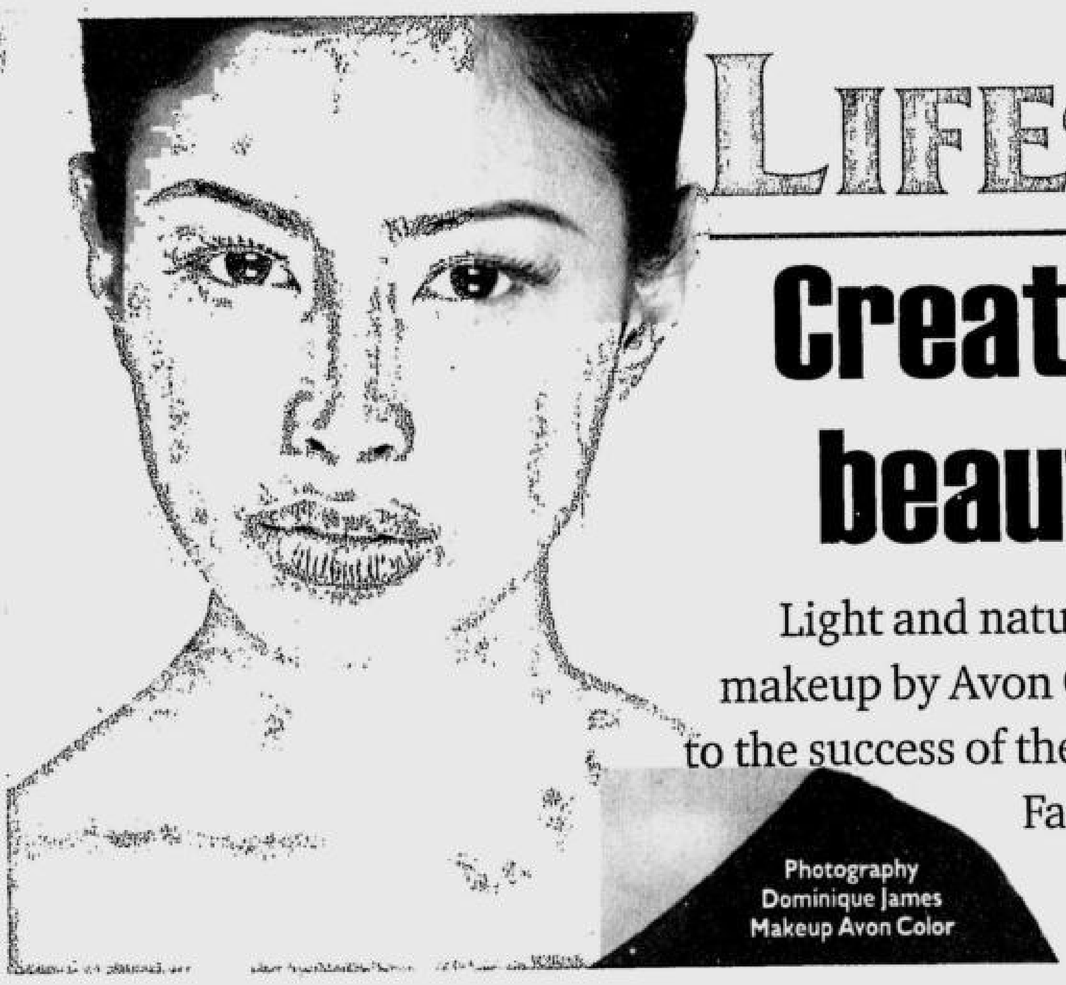
BEAUTY

Creating beauty

Light and natural-looking makeup by Avon Color is key to the success of the Philippine Fashion Week



Photography Dominique James
Makeup Avon Color

KNOCKOUT!

Ria Francisco-Prieto

EVERY YEAR, during Philippine Fashion Week, the country's best and brightest designers gather for days of pomp and pageantry, of passionate fashion statements and maddeningly beautiful shows that set Manila's most stylish denizens all abuzz.

Runway Productions' powerhouse tandem of Joey and Audie Espino, who have been at the helm of this fashion bonanza for the past 10 years, deserves kudos for putting on the biggest show yet this year.

Recently, I went backstage with Avon Color, the official makeup sponsor of Philippine Fashion Week '07, to speak with Avon Color makeup artist Jen Delica, whose creative input helped this year's makeup artists come up with looks that added oomph to the outfits.

It was most exciting to find out how fashion and beauty trends are crafted by some of the best designers who hail, not from cosmopolitan Manila, but from other parts of the country.

With their collections' vibrant colors, funky prints and

CREATING/ E2

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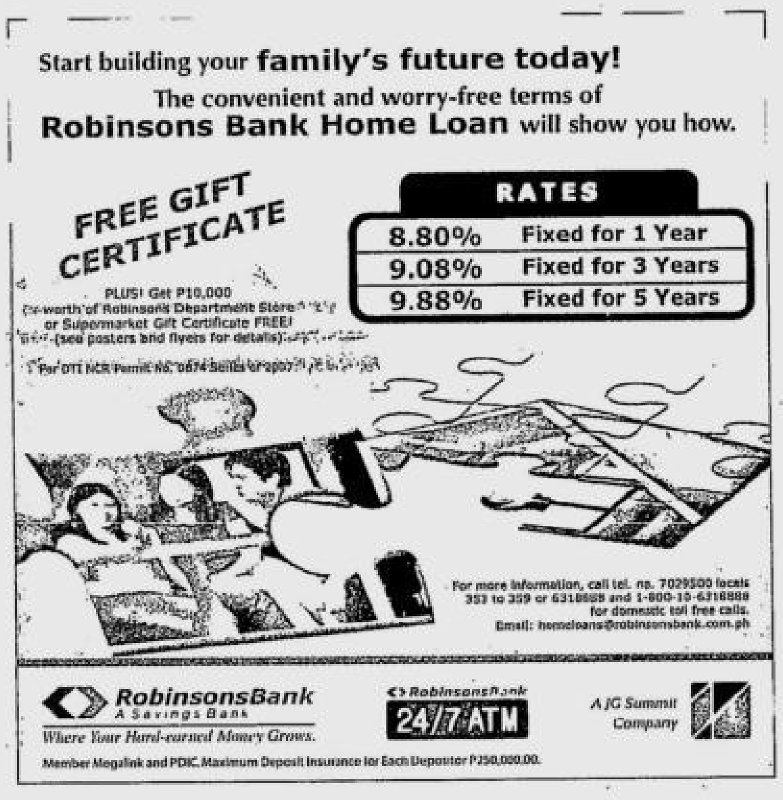

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AVON Color's Sunshine Bliss in pink and orange shades sets the mood at Philippine Fashion Week 2007.

Creating beauty

From page E1

oversized accessories, the design statements of artists from Davao, Iligan, Cebu, Iloilo and Ilocos were heard loud and clear at the Rockwell Tent last weekend.

Davao, for one, is fast becoming a hub for fashion. Davaoeños Emi-Alexander Englis, Benjie Panizales and Eric Sapaula offered Fashion Week devotees an unconventional mix of rich textures, angular cuts and bold messages, with Avon Color completing their design aesthetic.

Englis said he derived fashion inspiration from the square. His mostly white pieces, however, did not look boxy or boring at all, and can even go from day to night.

ERIC Sapaula gets his voice heard on the runway. Avon Color Sunshine Bliss makes the statement louder.

With structured details and shell accessories, his collection was a relaxing set that evoked a tropical feel.

Panizales created a retro space-age look by fusing rugged materials such as corduroy and velvet into short dresses with green, red and blue accents.

Davao's laidback vibe was evident in the clean lines, creating a funky set of still very classy pieces.

Witty phrases

Getting his message across quite literally was Sapaula, whose tops were emblazoned with witty phrases and questions that promoted environmental awareness. Complementing the shirts were patchwork pants and short skirts made of plaid and ethnic printed fabric woven in Davao, for a truly hippie look.

"I want people to reflect about the fashion and beauty industries," he said. "As much as possible, let's not be frivolous, because we may be affecting the environment that way."

Light and natural-looking makeup was key to achieving balance with the very stylized outfits. Avon Color's liquid foundation in skintone shades served as a base for the bronzed faces, while Avon Color Powder Blush Duo in pink and rose tones made the more dewy faces glow.

Another designer from Mindanao, Lagat showed promise. He said his collection was a tribute to women who celebrate their independence. His blousy tops and short shorts in metallic colors were clearly made for partying. A native of Iligan city, Lagat injected elegance by using a shiny brocade material handwoven by a Muslim tribe.

The eyes for Lagat's collection were given a sexy, rock-and-roll edge with the help of Avon Color Astonishing Length Waterproof Mascara, and a slightly smudged up Glimmerstick in black for a smoky effect.

Asymmetrical details

Cebu's Jun Escario and OJ Hofer took their cue from mid-19th-century modern art and futurism. Models created a splash as they strutted down the catwalk in dresses and tops with bold, asymmetrical details, while clutching the collection's trademark oversized beach bags.

A short dress in shocking blue (Jun called it "chemical blue") and with tiny laser-cut mirrors as accents was a big hit (and was also one of my favorites).

Paying homage to international designing duo Dolce and Gabbana, Iloilo's Aldrich Aparicio made a romantic, sensual statement by mixing animal and floral prints with black, white and red details. Avon Color provided nude and earth-tone shades to create a barely there look with lots of shimmer on tan complexions.

The fair-skinned models went for Avon Color's Pure White Ultra Dual Foundation in Almond for a dewy base with white shimmer, perfectly highlighting Aparicio's luxe romantic looks.

Redefining resort wear was Ilocano designer Alex Pigao, who was inspired by the Banaue Rice Terraces and the circle. His red-and-black ensembles were accented by textured ponchos and tops in native materials, as well as carabao bone and coral accessories by Arnel Papa.

"For the face," said Pigao, "I wanted it beautiful, very summer and not heavy."

Makeup artists achieved a fresh and fun look for Escario, Hofer and Pigao by highlighting orange-peach eyes and cheeks, as well as coral lips, with the help of Avon Color's Sunshine Bliss collection. Layers of Sunshine Peach accent were applied on eyelids, and Sunshine Peach highlighter around the corners of the eyes and under the eyebrows to make the eyes sparkle.

BENJIE Panizales' retro-chic corduroy dresses are complemented by Avon Color Sunshine Bliss' Sunshine Peach eyeshadow and Coral lip gloss.

Avon Color's Powder Blush Duo in Russet and Peche gave the models a summery glow, while Sunshine Peach Lip Gloss duo in Golden Coral and Sunshine Peach provided the perfect finishing touch.

Philippine Fashion Week 2007 was a dazzling showcase of talent, from the outfits down to makeup. The myriad colors, cuts, textures and details on display gave me enough inspiration for the rest of my outfits this year.

I can't wait for 2008's fashion and beauty revelations!

Makeup look

Say goodbye to looks that make you fade into the background! Make this a summer to remember by enhancing your natural best with makeup that shows you know how to have fun.

It's easy enough, says Avon Color consultant and top makeup artist Jen Delica.

Highlight the eyes with colors that pop. Start experimenting with Avon Color's Sunshine Bliss Eyeshadow duos in Sunshine Peach and Sunshine Pink.

For more options, Avon has the True Color Eyeshadow Quad compacts. Choose from Candy Sweets in sunrise, minty, aqua and taffy colors; Lilac Dream in rich crème, lily, lilac smash and taupe combination; or Deepest Rose in pink frosting, wildberry, twinkle and steel. Accentuate these colors with Avon Color Glimmerstick for eyes in black and Astonishing Lengths Waterproof mascara.

For the cheeks, try brighter shades of peach, coral and pink for a younger, fresher glow. Avon Color True Color Blush Duo comes in peach and coral, pink and roses, or rose luster and silk.

Also, remember that color should be concentrated on the apples of your cheeks to make you look like you just came from under the sun.

Lips that look moist and healthy are a trademark summer look that can be achieved by using Avon Color Sunshine Bliss mini-lipsticks in coral, peach and rose. Top with Sunshine Bliss lip gloss duo in coral and peach for that glamorous shimmer.

E-mail the author at rbeauty@inquirer.com.ph

AN ARRAY of Avon-colored faces backstage.

Memory-rich aromas

MAKEOVER 911

Kinny Salas

PACO RABANNE EAU DE METAL was the first non-baby cologne fragrance I bought when I turned 13. Mom gave me the money and said I was now allowed to buy a grown-up eau de toilette of my choice.

Having been in love with it since I was 9 years old, I did not think of buying anything else when Mom allowed me to buy my own stuff.

ISM Abbracio

Metal is clean, sexy, perfect for spring or summer; it's a floral that does not smell like an old lady bouquet or a boring single flower.

There are three floral scents that appeal to me the same way as Eau de Metal, which I can only describe as flirtatiously feminine and floral with packaging to match.

1. **Nanette Lepore Eau de Parfum, 30 ml (P1,950)**—Top notes: moonstone rose, white peach and cranberry juice. Body: blackcurrant nectar, jasmine, lime juice. Bottom notes: violet, amber and sandalwood. A creamy type fruity floral that reminds some people of sangria.

2. **Lulu Guiness Eau de Parfum, 30 ml (P1,950)**—With sweet pea, clementine, Easter lilies, bluebells and apple blossoms. This is the closest to Metal in fragrance at least with my body chemistry. I dare say it's even more addicting and has a longer staying power than Metal.

3. **Acca Kappa Calycanthus, 100 ml**—Calycanthus is a flower that smells heavenly even in an Italian winter blended with jasmine. It also has orange blossom, honey and musk. It has a creamy, spicy, sweet floral aroma that lingers and smells better the longer it is on, like a clean fresh garden in spring.

Smelling clean

There is a study that shows that one's choice of favorite scent stems from one's happy memories during childhood, regardless of gender.

Designer Inno Sotto had this in mind when he formulated his two new unisex fragrances.

Let your nose and body chemistry decide which makes you smell fresh and clean instead of relying on packaging and labels.

Baiser (*be zee*), **100 ml, (P1,950)**—The French word for kiss. It derives its citrus note from the blossom of the bitter orange tree, which I feel will appeal to those who grew up drinking fresh orange juice during picnics at the park with our parents and playmates. There is a slight woodsy or nutty note like the trees at the park.

Abbracio, 100 ml (P1,950)—The Italian word for embrace. It reminds me of lime-flavored snow cones with amber undertones in the dry down. I gravitate toward it, like a favorite uncle's aftershave.

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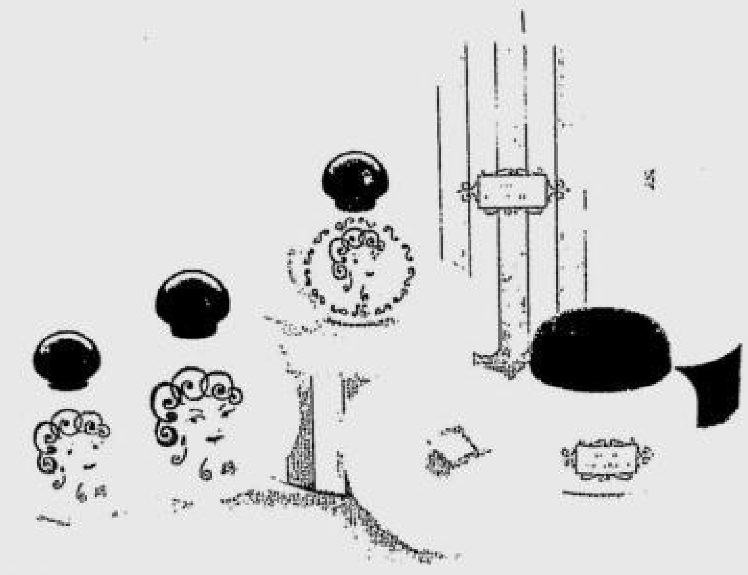

LULU Guinness line

Extensive falling hair

There was a time late last year when a series of stressful events and hormonal changes led to my hair falling off in clumps.

In denial at first, I saw a picture of me from the back and saw my bald spot; it was scary.

Facing the mirror, I took a good look at my hairline and saw my scalp's surface peeking through sparse strands of hair. My hairdresser even pointed it out and suggested I see a doctor for Mesoscalp.

Avacor sent me a kit. It took three weeks for people to see the results in me and this was even without the Nutricaps. I was only using the detox shampoo daily for two weeks every other day. I alternated the hair-thickening shampoo and conditioner for hair ends.

Results: I have new hair growth on the hairline and the top of my head. When the detox shampoo and solution ran out, I took Nutricaps but stayed with the shampoo and conditioner.

The new hair strands did not fall off but grew longer especially on the hairline and sides. My hairdresser noticed my hair got thicker and I had less falling hair.

Right now I am just using the detox shampoo twice a week for maintenance, keeping the conditioner on hair strands away from scalp.

Avacor 3-in-1 (P3,880) breakdown: Detox shampoo (P880); Topical Solution with Minoxidil two-percent (P1,780); and Nutricap (P1,480). Hair-Thickening Shampoo and Conditioner (P580 each).

Avacor is available at All Watson's outlets. All fragrances are available at Rustan's Essenses.

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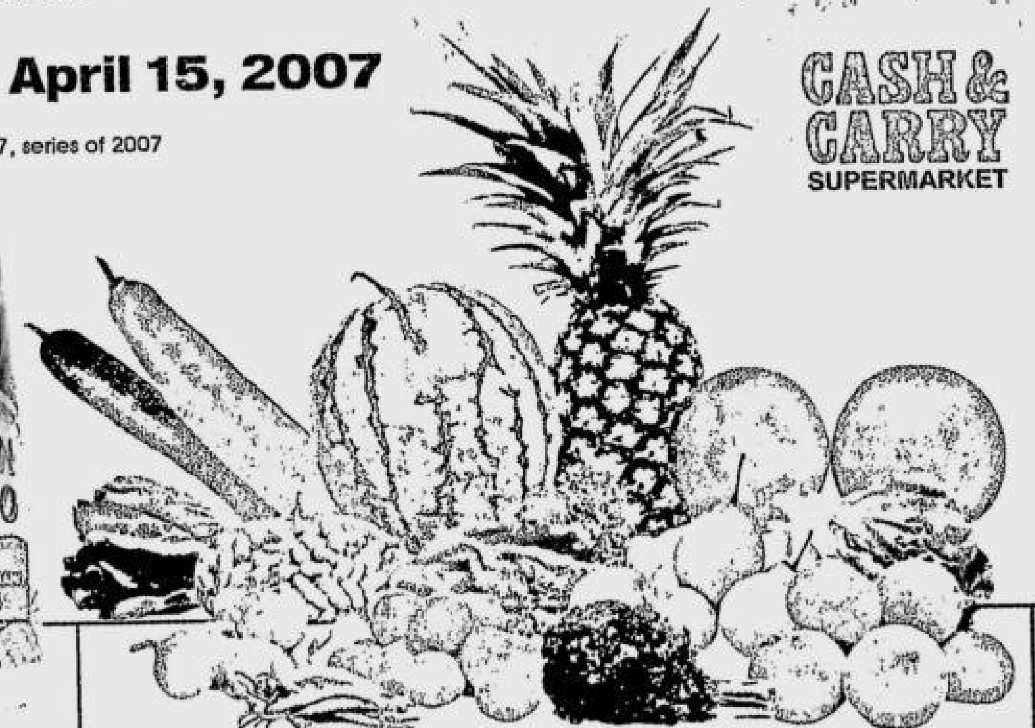

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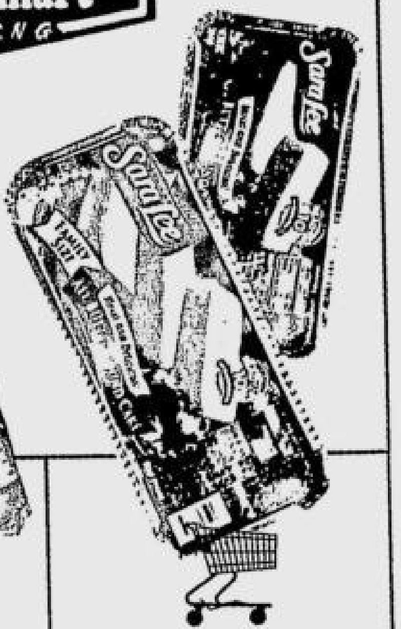

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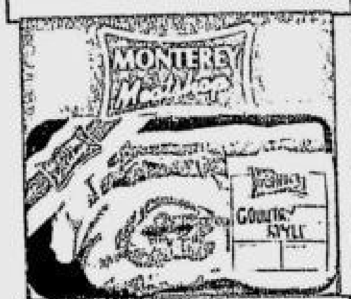

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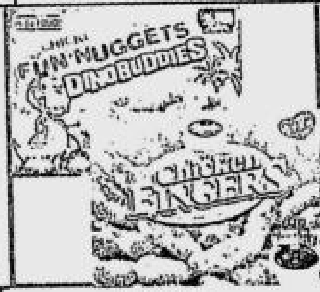

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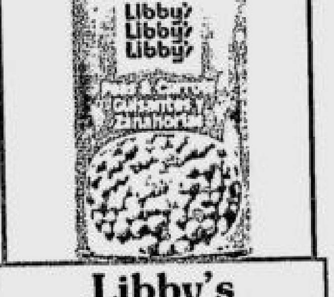

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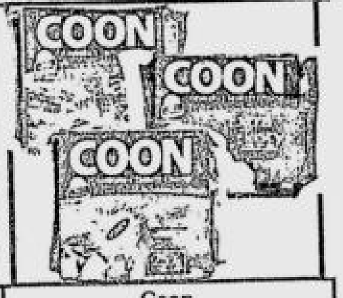
Sugar-Free 12-Grain Loaf
260g P36.95/pk



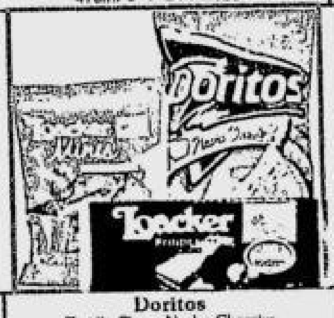
Coon
Black Cheddar, Tasty 250g P127.75/pk
Extra Tasty 250g P141.95/pk
Smooth & Mild 250g P121.50/pk
Light & Tasty 250g P133.95/pk
Extra Light & Tasty 250g P146.50/pk

Tang
Instant Drink Mix, Refill
Orange, Mangga, Pineapple, Ponkan-C 500g P38.50/pk

BluSkies
Crackers, 10 packs Spring Onion 250g P25.75/pk
Rich & Creamy 250g P23.95/pk
Milk 250g P24.50/pk
Whole Wheat Grahams, 10 packs 250g P23.20/pk

Bourbon
Aurora Biscuit 162g P69.50/pk
Grassom Biscuit
183g P69.50/pk

Nabisco
Teddy Grahams Snacks
Chocolatey Chip, Chocolate, Cinnamon 283g P113.50/box



Doritos
Tortilla Chips, Nacho Cheesier 198.4g P78.50/pk
Loacker
Crispy Wafers, Fondente 150g P71.00/pk
Minis Napolitaner, 20's 200g P119.50/pk

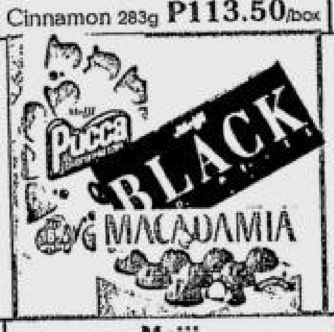
Leslie's
Clover Chips, Cheese
55g P11.50/pk 85g P17.15/pk
Cheezy Corn Crunch
70g P12.75/pk 22g P4.15/pk

ECJ Farms
Green Mango Puree, Pet
1.5lit P171.50/bot

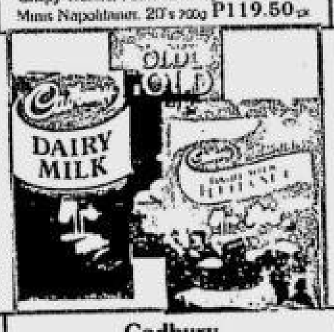
Duncan Hines
Premium Brownie Mix Chocolate Lovers Brownies, Walnut
498g P139.50/box
Turtle 473g P139.50/box

Duncan Hines
Premium Cake Mix, Fudge Marble, Swiss Chocolate, Lemon Supreme, French Vanilla
517g P97.95/box

ECJ Farms
Dried Yellow Mangoes
100g P42.85/pk
Dried Green Mangoes
100g P47.75/pk



Meiji
Macadamia Chocolate
87g P76.75/pk
Pucca Choco Pretzel 50g P25.50/pk
Bar Black Chocolate 70g P32.50/box

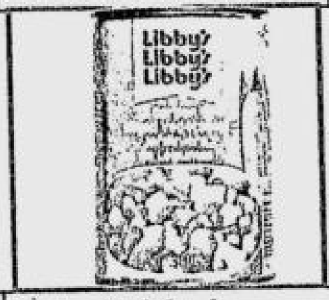


Cadbury
Dairy Milk Fruit & Nut
200g P158.50/pk 250g P177.25/bar
Dairy Milk, Old Gold Roast Almond
250g P177.25/bar

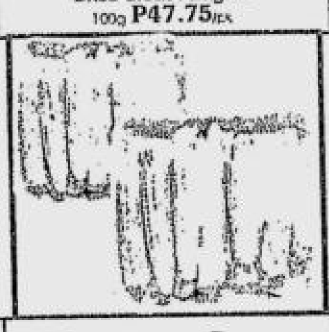
Yame
Jelly Mixed Fruit, 6 cups
6's x 100g P56.75/pk

Yame
Jelly Fruit Flavored Jelly Cup,
20's x 380g P15.50/pk

Sue Bee
Clover Honey 1.4kg P407.50/bot
Aunt Sue's
Raw Wild Honey 454g P163.75/bot

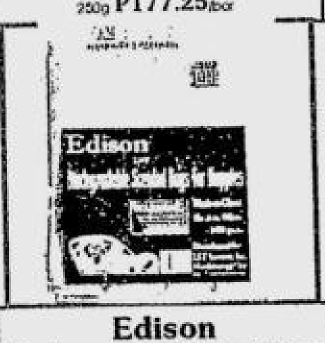


Libby's
Mixed Vegetables
425g P36.50/can

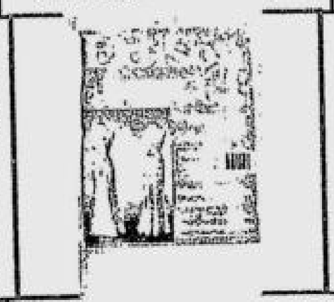


Young Corn
P63.00/kg

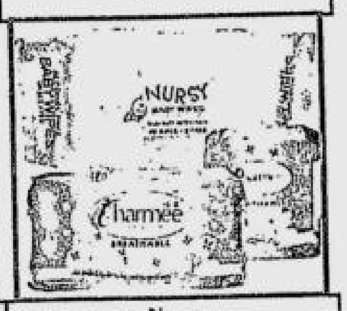
LST Lance
Slide & Lock #7, 8 ½"x 7"
40pcs. P90.00/pk



Edison
Biodegradable Scented Bags for Nappies 26cm x 18cm
100pcs. P70.00/pk



Edison
Cloth Cover for Gowns, 70cm x 135cm
10pcs. P60.00/pk



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Baby Wipes Unscented 66 wipes P61.50/pk
Charmee
Breathable Pantyliners, Unscented
20s P20.50/pk 8s P9.50/pk
Lavender Scent
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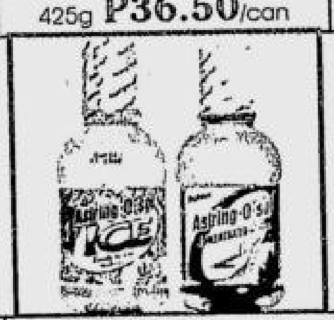
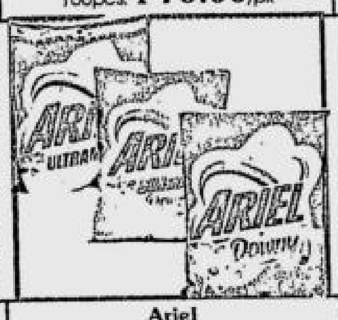
Flouride Toothpaste, Triple Action 160ml P70.50/tube
Palmolive
Naturals Shampoo Fresh & Bounce, Silky Straight, Anti Dandruff, Brilliant Shine, Active Nourishment, Intensive Moisture Hair Repair [illegible] P72.50[illegible]



Astring-O-Sol
Concentrated Mouthwash, Freshmint 125ml P89.50[illegible]
Mouthwash Ice 120ml P72.00/bot
Sensodyne
Toothpaste Gentle Whitening [illegible] P193.95[illegible]

Sanicare
Bathroom Tissue, 600's 3-ply [illegible] P131.10/pk
Jade
Bathroom Tissue, 2-ply 6sets P370.50/pk
Cheers
Folded Table Napkins [illegible] P100.70[illegible]

Joy
Extra Bathroom Tissue, 2-ply 12rolls P127.25/pk
Kotex
Pantiliners Longer & Wider 16s P48.25/pk
Huggies
Dry Comfort Diaper XL 34s P380.50/pk



Ariel
Detergent Powder Oxybleach, Ultramatic 1.6kg P291.50/pk
Sunshine Freshness of Downy, Freshness of Downy
1.5kg P324.65/pk

Surf
Kalamansi Detergent Powder
2.5kg P135.50/pk
Sunsilk
Shampoo Soft Touch 200ml P76.25[illegible]

Clax
Professional Laundry Powder Detergent
Heavy Duty 10kg P720.00/sack
Regular Strength
10kg P580.00/sack

[illegible] Theater Drive cor. Commerce Ave., Alabang [illegible] Muntinlupa • Tels. 850-7[illegible] • Store Hours: 8:30 am - 9:00 pm • [illegible] • Store Hours: 9:00 am - 8:30 pm
• Greenhills Shopping Center • Tels. 721-0642; 721-1[illegible] • Store Hours: 8:30 [illegible] Cash&Carry Supermarket [illegible]

SENSUAL INTRIGUE. Dark and dramatic hairstyles defined by sculptured, lacquered looks, this trend favors sensually elegant hues like black, dark brown, plum, deep dusty blue, and bluish gray for a perfectly groomed and controlled look.

Mane Event: Trend Vision 2007 at 10th Philippine Fashion Week

INTERNATIONAL HAIR EXPERT Wella presents the year's hot hair trends—Nordic Serenity, Sensual Intrigue, Pop Couture and Rustic Deluxe—at the 10th Philippine Fashion Week (PFW).

The annual Wella hair trend report, based on research findings of trend agency Carlin International of Paris, has become the style bible of both industry professionals and the fashion-forward crowd. The trend concepts will be unveiled in tandem with fabulous creations from some of the Philippines' most notable designers. And there's no better place for this glitz-filled launch than PFW, the premier fashion platform of the country.

Taking their cue from a variety of inspirations, the four Trend Vision styles each exude a uniqueness in look and feel, leaving trend watchers the freedom to settle on what suits them best. Here's the lowdown on the latest from Wella.

POP COUTURE. A shout-out to neon installations, pattern mixes and bold colors of the funky '60s, this style embraces solid base colors set off by the perfect craftsmanship of carved head shapes, short fringes and beautiful perfect finishes.

From the clever blending of cool class and poetic minimalism, Nordic Serenity sets off a dreamlike play of light and shadow—dramatizing the search for a spiritually sophisticated lifestyle that shuns materialistic trappings. The illuminated consciousness of sky and water elements are seen in hairstyles that are feminine, soft, fluid, wispy and light.

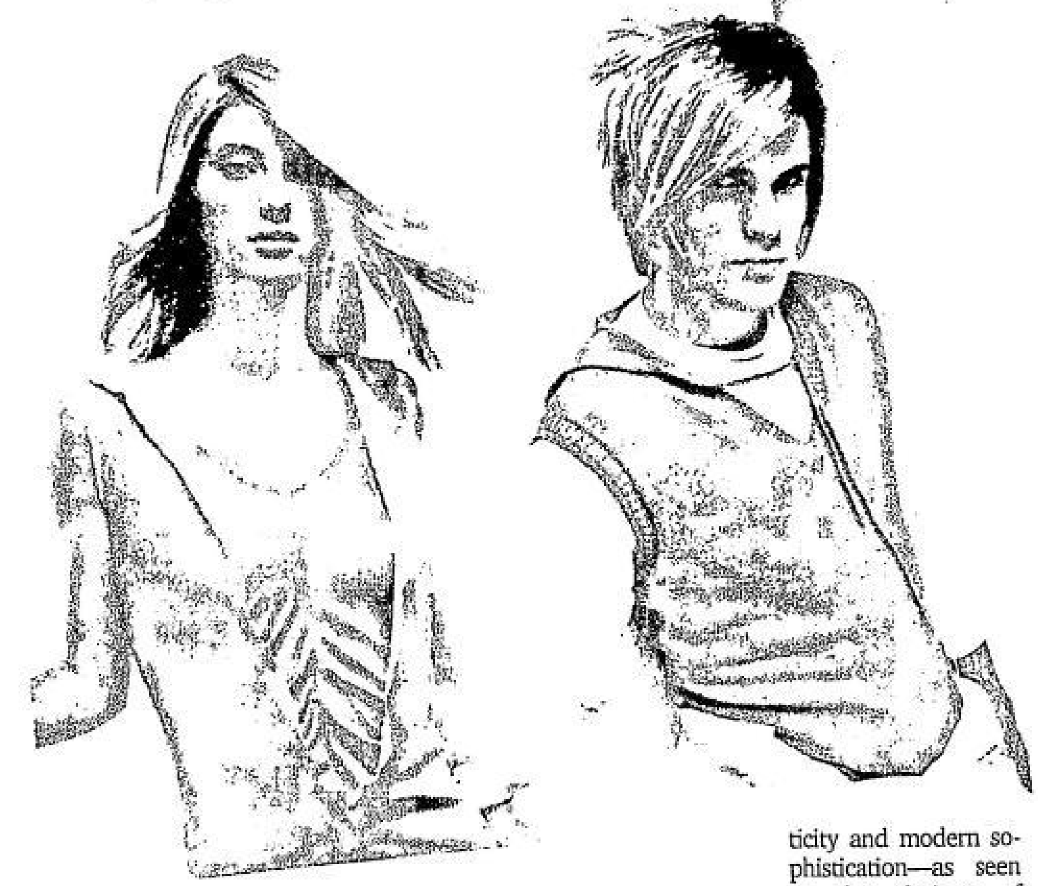
Head-hugging hairstyles boast of pure healthy hair strands done up in cool blondes and light browns that radiate with soft highlights. Slim, flowing lines that are slightly wavy can range from the very short to the very long. Always groomed and shiny, these styles all give life to the heartbreaking beauty of the Earth's arctic regions.

Sensual Intrigue embodies temptation and heady secrets, with tactile sexuality tempered by theatrical restraint and wild longings controlled by cultivated affectations. Bringing to mind Lalique designs, Tamara Lempicka art, and the courtly flamboyance of Art Deco, the trend captures the intense schemes of serial seducers who lure the objects of their affection with rare, decadent treats like the most expensive caviar and sweets.

Dark and dramatic, Sensual Intrigue hairstyles are defined by sculptured, lacquered looks. These perfectly groomed and controlled hairstyles favor sensually elegant hues like black, dark brown, plum, deep dusty blue, and bluish gray.

Pop Couture is playful, young, fun, bold and kaleidoscopic. It is a charged-up nostalgia trip to the bold shapes and the explosion of colors in funky '60s fashion with groovy add-ons much like the art of Karim Rashid, Fendi's trinkets, and amusing pastry.

Bursting with the quirky energy of neon light installations, rounded shapes, pattern mixes, tulip skirts, and rainbow stripes, this style embraces the whole spectrum of solid base hair colors, set off by the perfect craftsmanship of carved head shapes, short fringes and beautiful perfect finishes. Pop Couture is straight hair embellished with surprising effects that exude that come-hither vibe.



NORDIC SERENITY. Head-hugging hairstyles boast of healthy hair strands done up in cool blondes and light browns with soft highlights. Inspired by sea and sky, these hairstyles are fluid, wispy and light.

Exemplifying the fusion of primordial authenticity and modern sophistication—as seen in the designs of Michel Haillard and anything by Gucci—Rustic Deluxe is a celebration of elemental beauty. Hairstyles have the healthy, unfinished, fuss-free looks that come in the warm natural shades of amber, honey, cinnamon and reddish browns. Cut from middle to long lengths, they boast lots of structure and movement.

Taking inspiration from the raw yet pleasing textures of leather, pelt, wood, stone, and diamonds in the rough, Rustic Deluxe shows influences of the unpolished elegance of primitive artifacts and the magnificence of Old World art.

Philippine Fashion Week will run March 23-April 1 with Wella and the Wella Studio Team taking center stage March 26 with the grand unveiling of Trend Vision 2007 at the Rockwell Tent, Rockwell Center, Makati.

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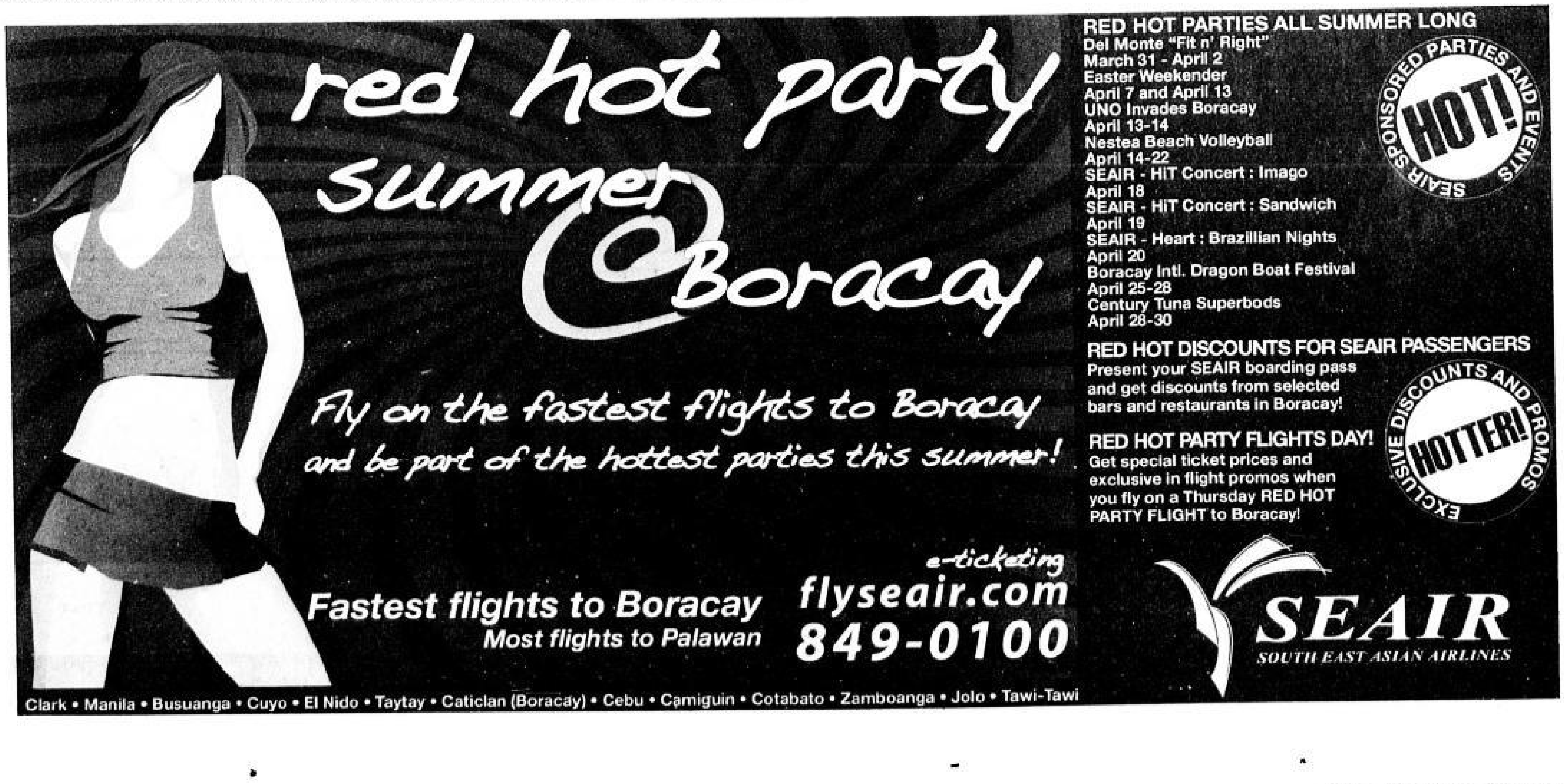

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April 18
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LIFESTYLE
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Apples Aberin-Sadhwani
and Jenni Epperson

FASHION

Shore cut

Silver V-neck top with belt, khaki hot pants

Folded & Hung ditches the ultra-bright colors this summer with its new earthy collection

Mabuhay!

Jenni Epperson

WHILE EVERYONE THIS summer is splashing on every bright color in the paint box, Folder & Hung is looking the other way—toward the sandy shores, to be sure!

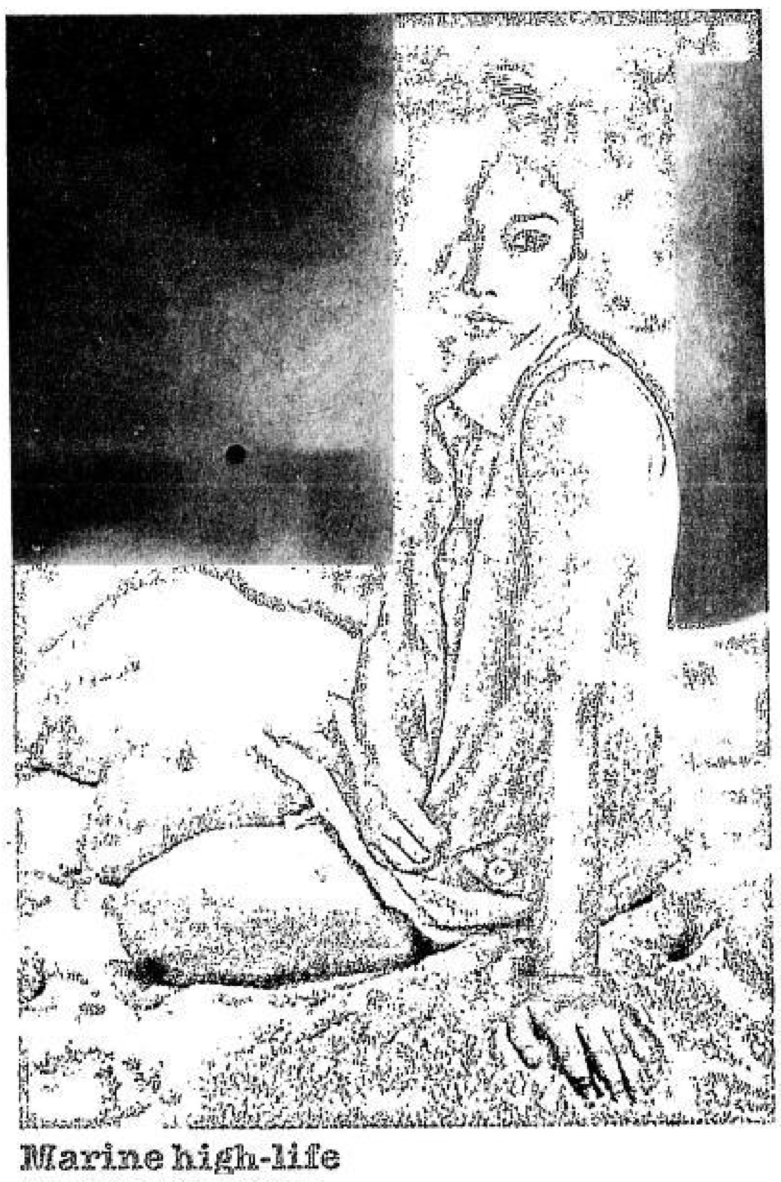
The 2007 F&H summer collection has lots of earth tones, sandy shades of beiges and browns, black and white basics and metallic sheens. The store's latest campaign explores romantic summer travel getaways. The color palette works as pieces that can be mixed and matched and layered to express different individual styles. Now that's scorching hot!

Street culture was the inspiration for this collection's styles, which mixes both local and Japanese influences to come up with wearable "real" styles. Think simple yet stylish, basic but with an extraordinary, elegant flair—like that wide metallic gold belt that adds pizzazz to an all-khaki number.

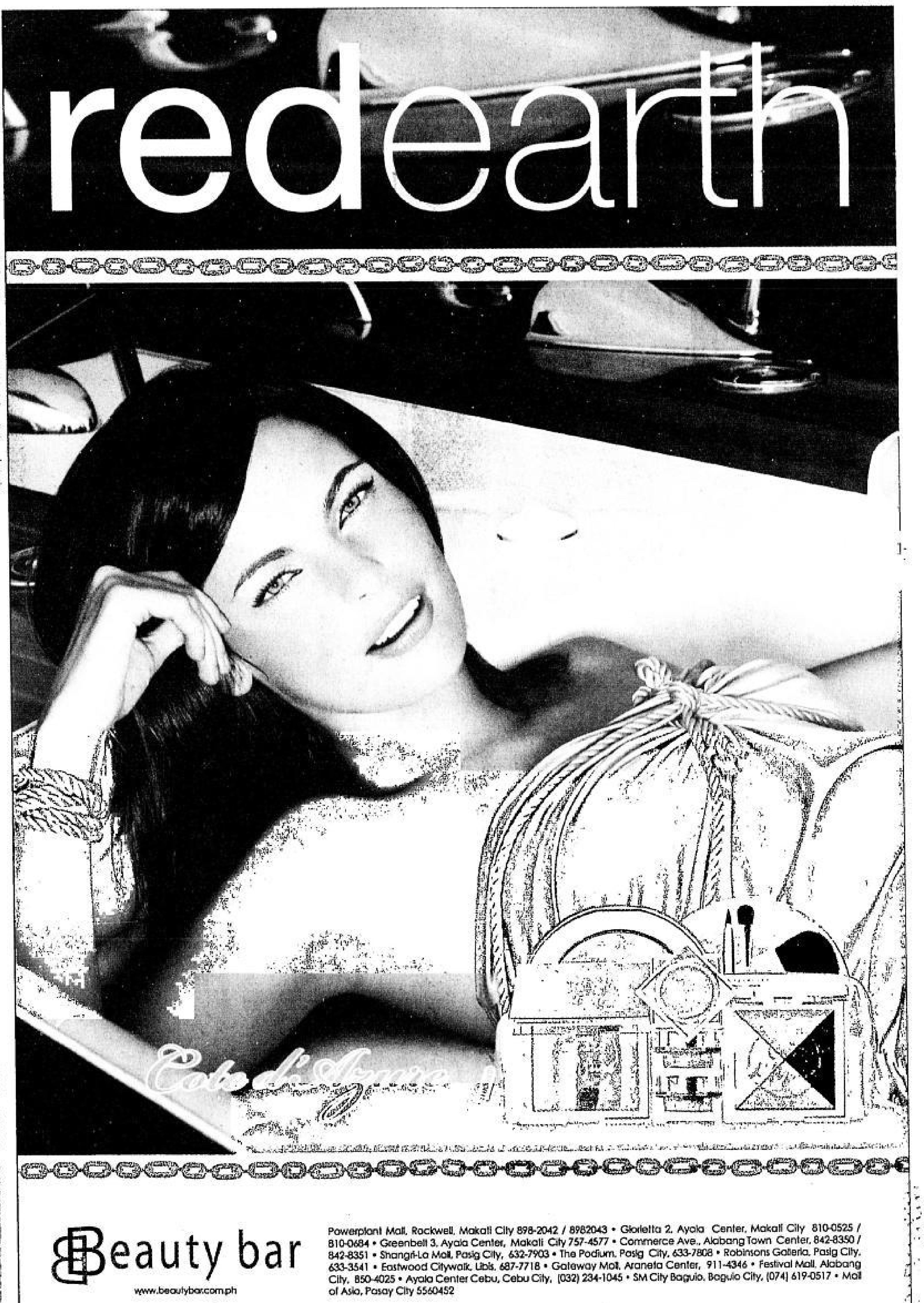
Fabrics are comfortable and soft, like linen, twills and cotton knits, to beat the oppressive summer heat.

Look out for silhouettes that are long, lean, sometimes boxy and not close to the body—yet another opposite in a season that's usually associated with short and tight-fit-

SHORE/ F2



Marine high-life
Baby blue cotton shirtdress



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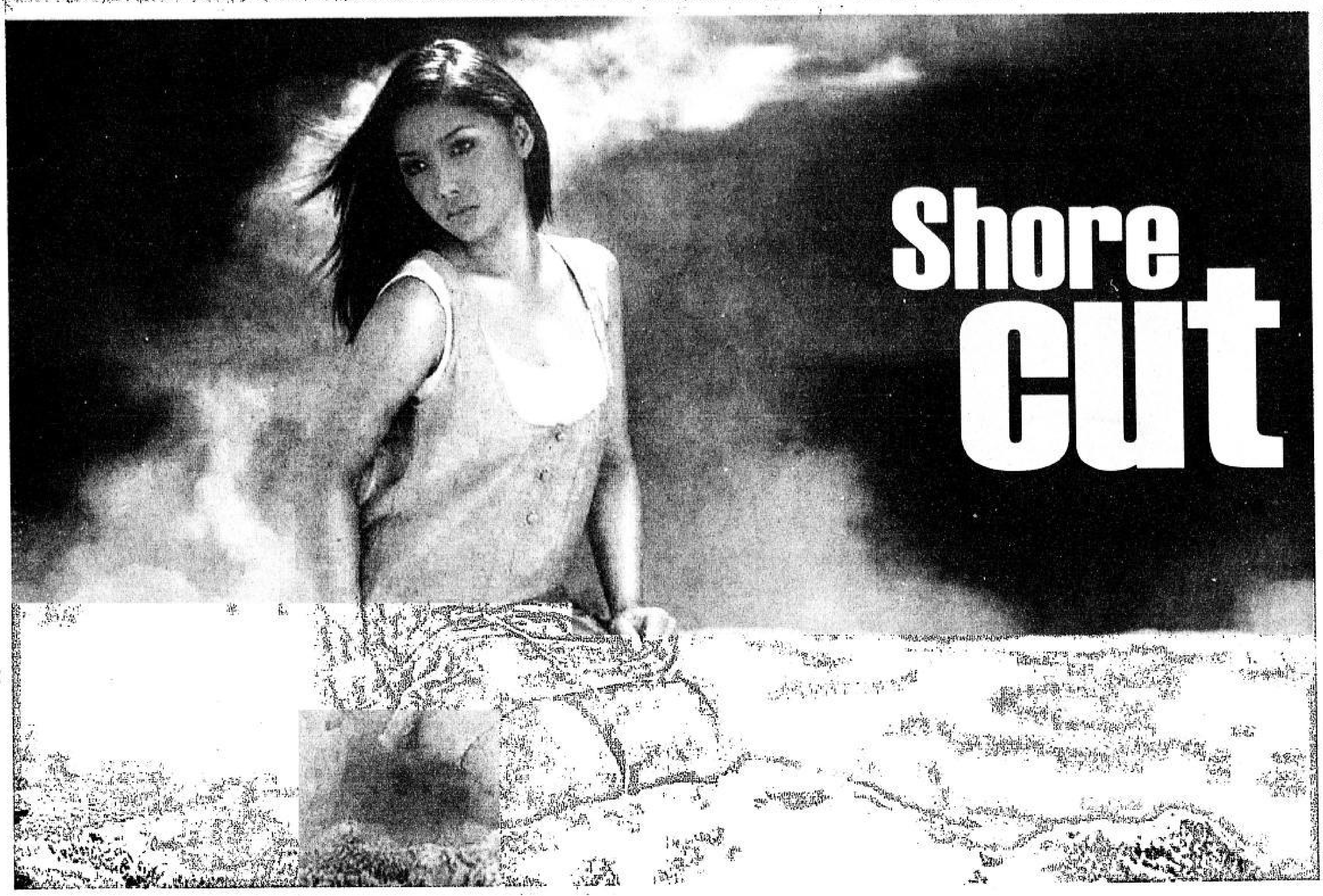

Shore cut

From page F1

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In recent years

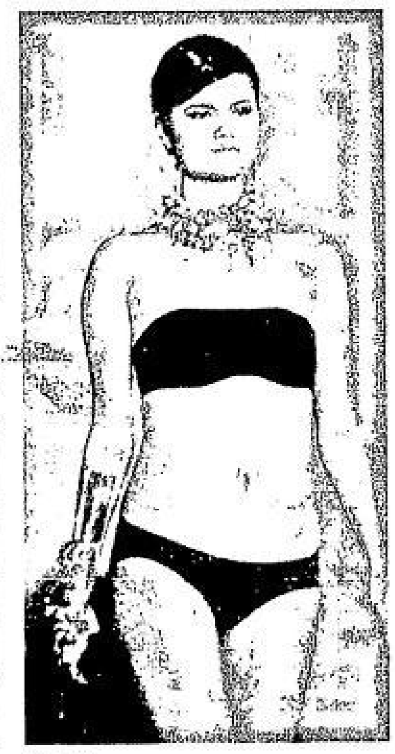
High-tid

Light blue sleeve
cream sleeveless

CHARINA Sarte

SARTE

ARNEL Papa



PAPA

LAUREL

QUILENDRINO

Sci-fi summer

From page F4

and partially "mirrorized" jersey and lamé outfits with huge bags made of plastic.

In keeping with the season, his women's clothes were either strapless or had plunging necklines. Thanks to their ample hemlines, however, Escario's pieces managed to look tame next to all those bathing suits.

Louis Claparols also served fashion fans with a wearable resort collection consisting of empire dresses, baby-doll tops and long skirts with strategic slits. Unlike most of his colleagues, he chucked gold and silver in favor of beige, chocolate, orange and various shades of pink.

After a minor misstep in last year's "Metrowear," Rhett Eala was back doing what he does best: feminine dresses made of silk organdy that flattered the female form.

Apart from painstakingly fashioning strips of folded fabrics into a single dress, Eala embellished a number of pieces with cut silk organdy fabrics shaped like teardrops. His blue and ivory pieces afforded the audience a refreshing break from all that bling.

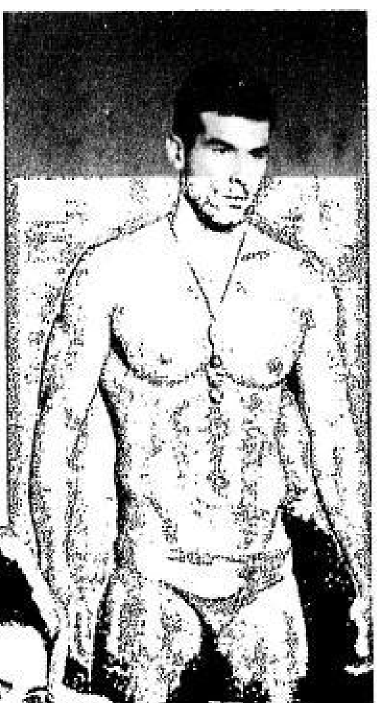
By staging the event (one day ahead of the bigger "Fashion Week"), Metro, the country's pioneer lifestyle glossy, was just being true to its word of making "Metrowear" a year-round affair.

Its next edition plans to highlight the works of veteran designer Auggie Cordero in a much-awaited solo show.

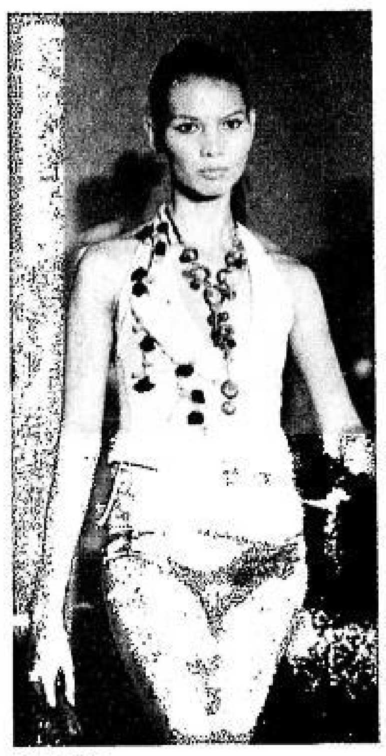
Some designers reportedly skipped "Fashion Week" to focus on their respective "Metrowear" collections later this year. They probably realized that it wouldn't pay to spread their presence too thinly, especially if ranged against the likes of... Oh, never mind!

It remains to be seen, though, if "Metrowear" has enough clout and staying power to reign as the country's premier fashion event.

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph



SAL Malto

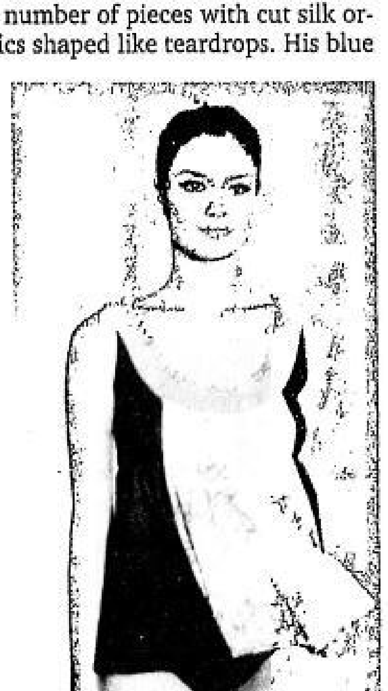


MALTO

RHETT Eala

EALA

TAN GAN



CLAPAROLS

JUN Escario

ESCARIO

RAM

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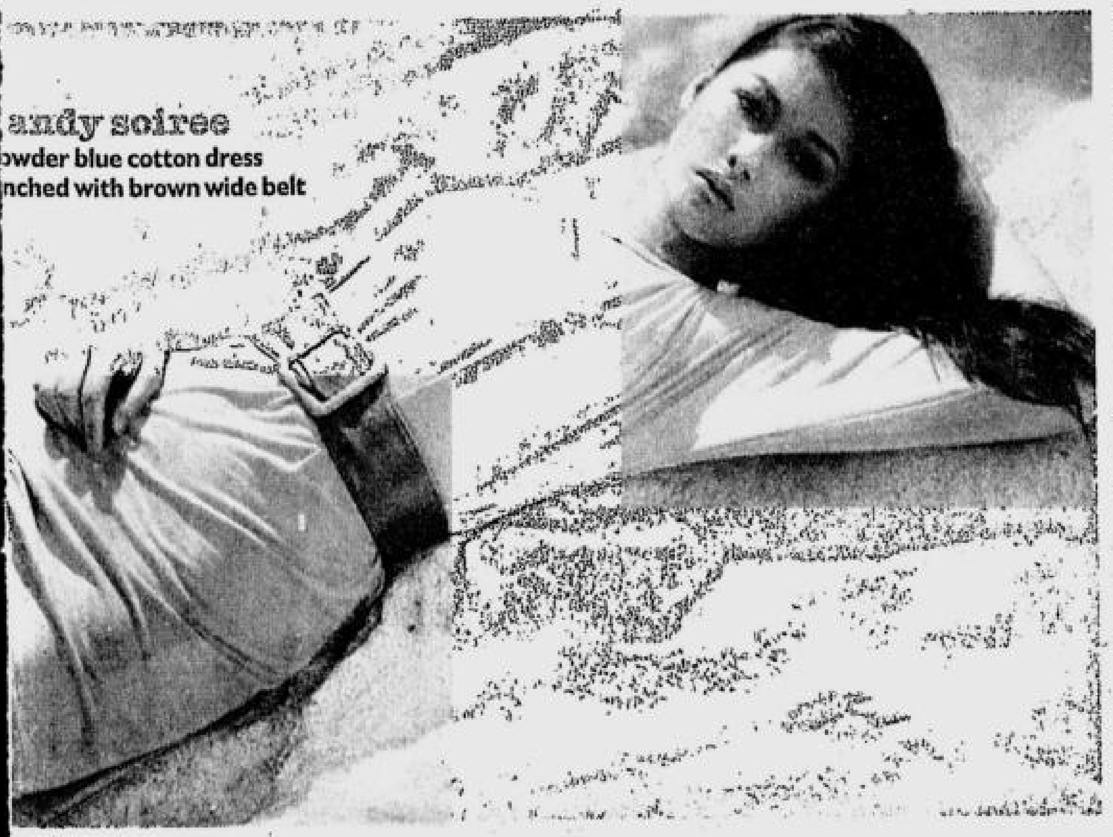

andy soiree
owder blue cotton dress
nched with brown wide belt

Fabulous fish net
Gray knitted top, khaki hot pants

t graphic faux prints of
nd shades. Pouch pock-
ding details to plain
kinny and boxy.
ollection speaks of ver-
d function.
, F&H campaigns have made great buzz with their standout billboards that become instant conversation topics around the water cooler. Remember that super-sexy Illegally Low jeans billboard, with shirtless model Cedric Sandez literally stopping traffic? Or the sultry golden glow of Claudine Barretto?

This season, F&H unveils its latest head-turner: Maja Salvador.

Maja's showbiz career kickstarted in 2003 when she was reunited with her long-lost father on nationwide television. She had a breakthrough supporting role in "Sukob," for which she received awards. She did comedy with "First Day High" and received a Best Actress nomination for her "Maalaala Mo Kaya" episode with Vilma Santos.

Maja is a current mainstay at ASAP as part of the dance group UD4.

Maja embodies the youthful sophistication of F&H's summer wear. It's the contradictions that make her the perfect model for the new F&H campaign. She's spicy and feisty, innocent and simple, teasingly playful and effortless. F&H allows her to express her individuality and creativeness through her look, craft and lifestyle.

E-mail the author at jfashion@inquirer.com.ph

treat
ess dress,
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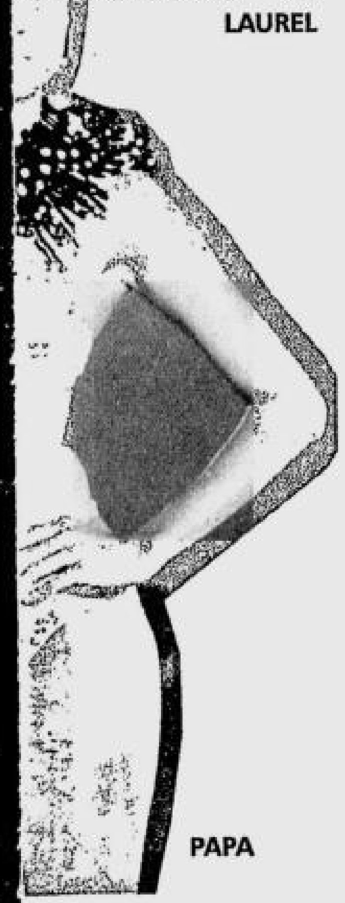
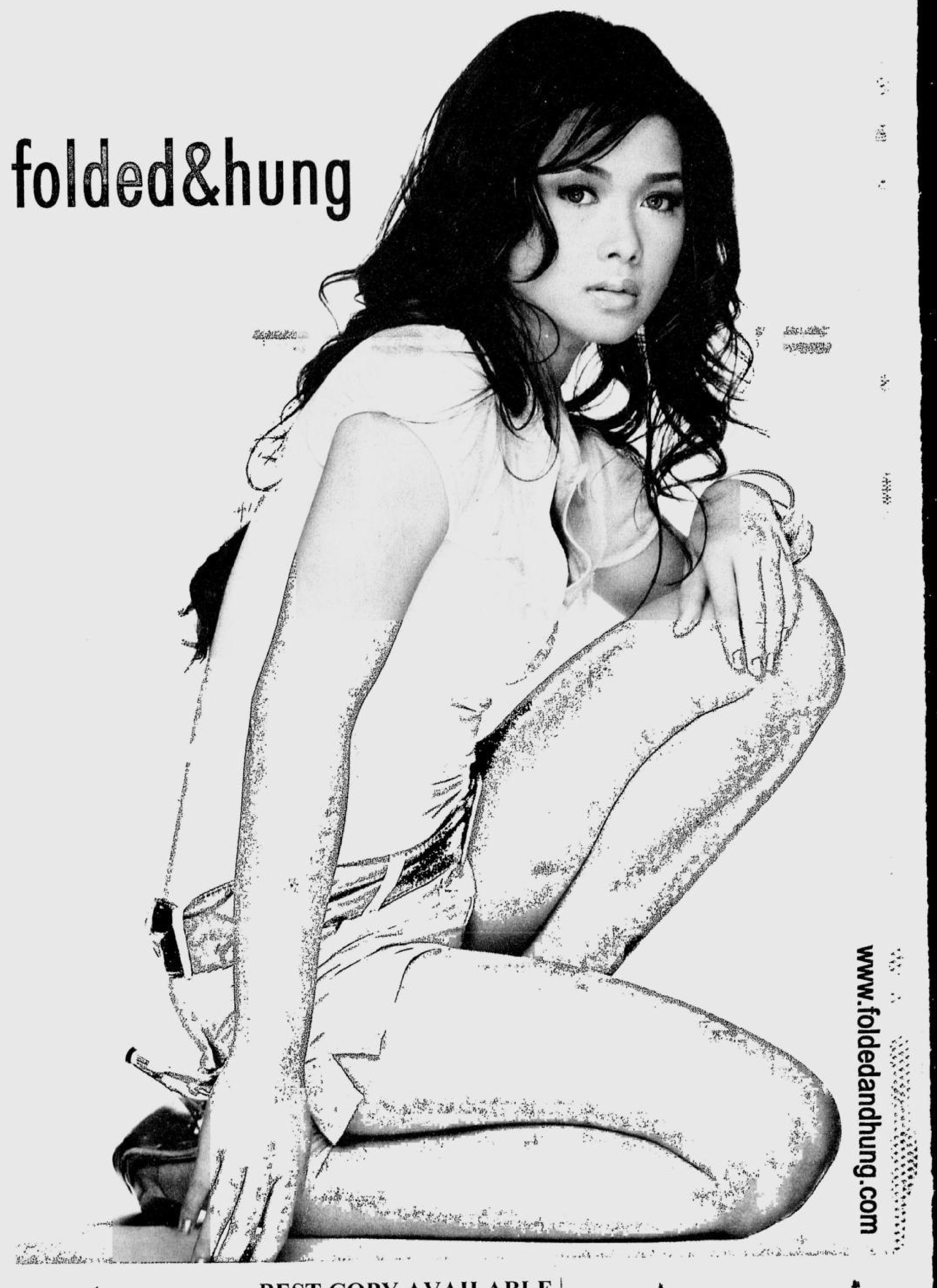
LAUREL



PAPA

OS-DIAZ



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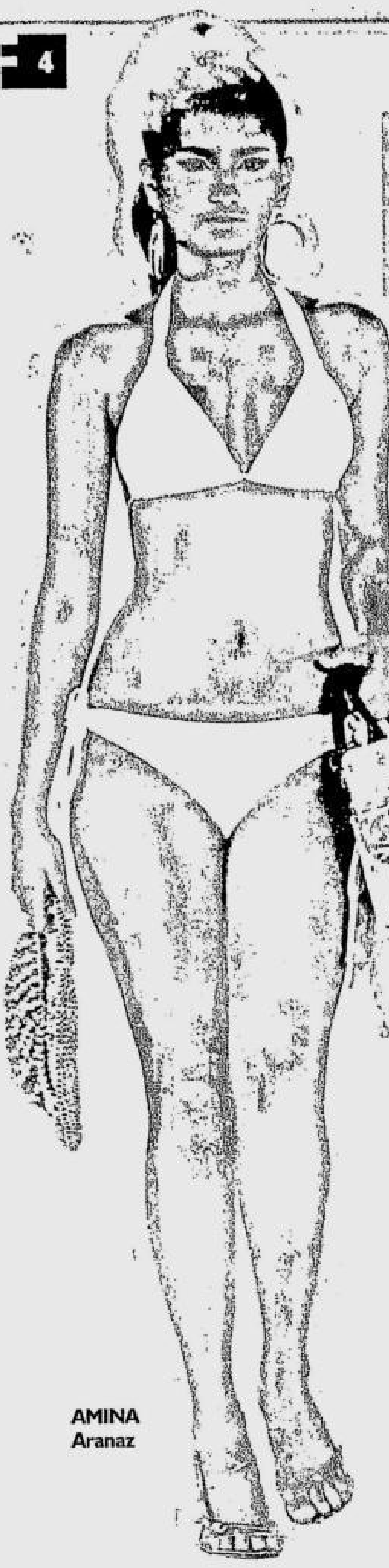


AMINA Aranaz

MITZI Quilendrino

LOUIS Claparols

PATRICE Ramos-Diaz

RAJO Laurel

LULU Tan Gan

Sci-fi summer

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

WATER-AVERSE FASHIONistas have more reasons to lounge by the poolside without looking the least bit dry and stiff, as several of the country's leading clothes, bags and accessories designers presented their respective summer collections at the recently concluded "Metrowear Summer."

The scorcher of a fashion show at the InterCon poolside featured the works of Rhett Eala, Rajo Laurel, Jun Escario, Mitzi Quilendrino, Arnel Papa and Amina Aranaz, among others. Not a few of the designers made use of such materials as knits, jersey, lurex, stretch overlay and the old reliable cotton.

Futurism continued to be the rage since many of them chose to use metallic fabrics and plastics. The celebrated Aranaz, for instance, played for the first time with such materials as plastics, which she mixed with straws and indigenous materials like *sabutan* and *pandan*.

Apart from silvery charms and coconut shells, which Aranaz used to add some punch to a number of oversized bags made of plastic, most of her items were devoid not only of colors, but also of her trademark embellishments.

Lulu Tan Gan, through young in-house designer Solenn Heusaff, injected a number of youthful touches to her knitwear by incorporating transparent nylon knits to several tops and dresses with exaggerated sleeves.

Heusaff also opted for pale colors, with the exception of a couple of colored blocks and bold stripes in black and white. From that day on, her line would be known to TG loyalists as Tan Gan by Solenn.

Metallic bathing suits may tend to look a bit unflattering to ordinary people, but not on "gifted" humans. In fact, they complemented perfectly a good number of models (especially those yummy Brazilian girls and boys) as the attendant shine all the more emphasized those tantalizing humps and bulges.

'Barbarella' look

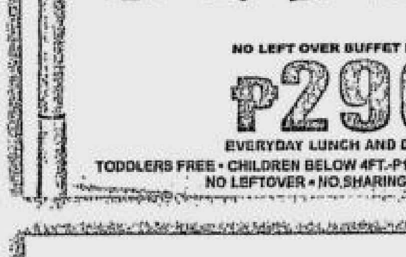
Laurel, for instance, channeled looks from the 1960s film "Barbarella" by fashioning two-piece swimwear and shorts in blinding gold. He managed to update them by using voluminous white cover-ups in the form of loose capes and jackets made of organza, silk Mikado and cotton voile.

Sal Malto also took his cue from women who lounge and transported them to the beach or poolside via minimally beaded stretch jersey swimsuits in shades of nude and earth.

Fellow Cebuano Jun Escario went for a pared-down approach as he paired his stretch

SCI-FI/ F2

The recent 'Metrowear Summer' fashion show at the InterCon poolside made much use of metallic fabrics and plastics



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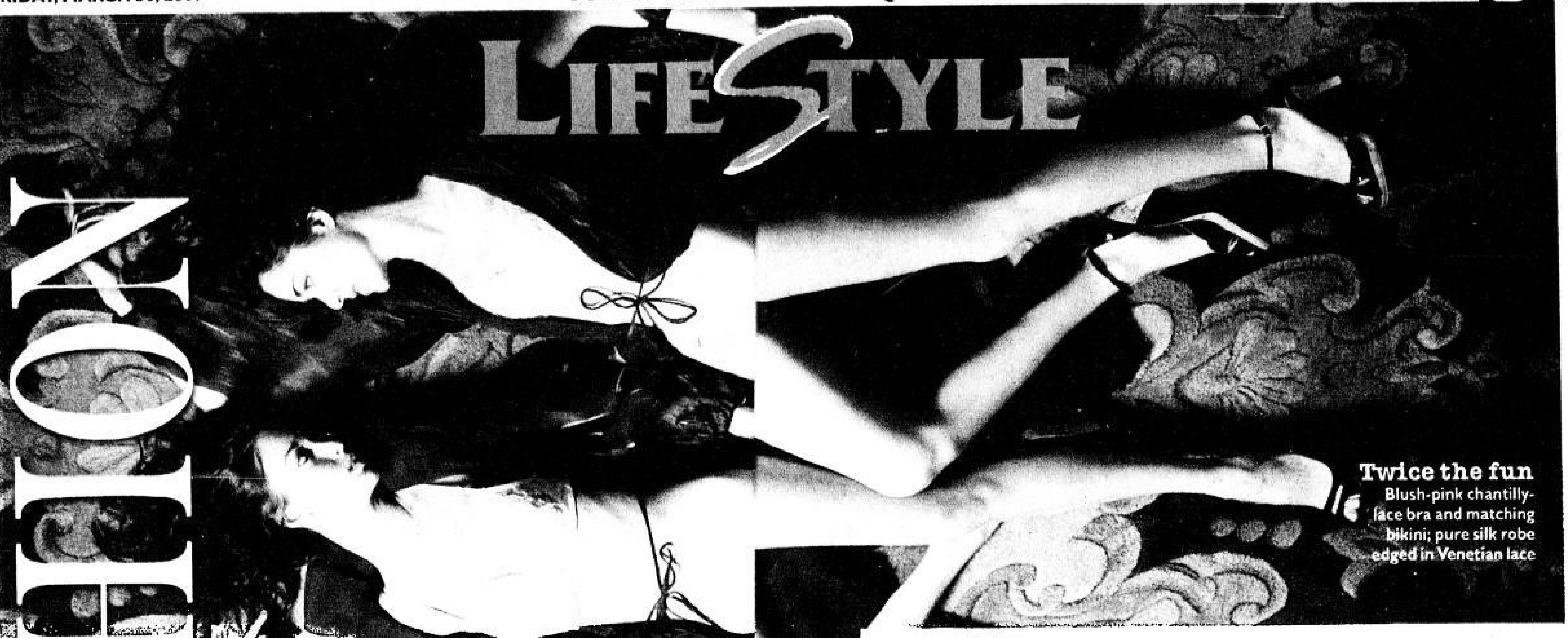
LIFESTYLE

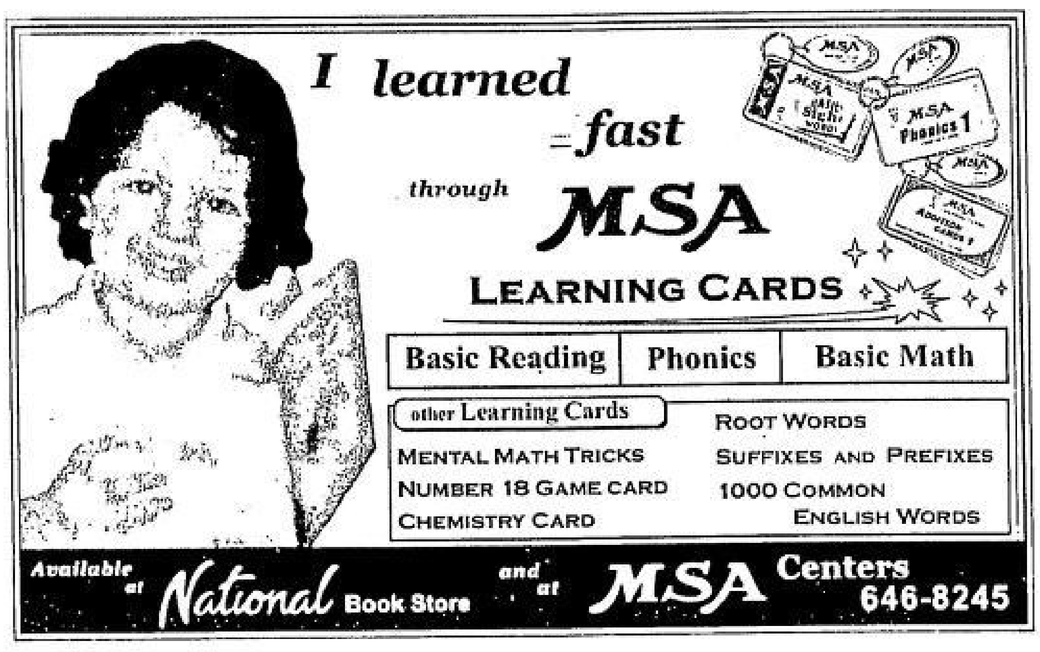


FASHION

The big tease

Twice the fun
Blush-pink chantilly-lace bra and matching bikini; pure silk robe edged in Venetian lace

STORY ON PAGE G2



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Dot matrix
ECRU stretch lace brassier, re-embroidered with glass beads; black and ecru waist cincher with matching Lycra bikini; black and ecru dotted silk organza cape

Photography
Steve Tirona
Sittings editor
Millet Arzaga
Makeup and skincare
Jigs Mayuga
of L'oreal Paris
Hair Vianney Guese
(0915-2089007)
for L'Oreal Paris Studio Line
Models Maria
(www.recomodeling.tk)
and Mercedes
(www.chameleoninlt.com)
Lingerie
Armando Fabia
(0921-4004785)
Accessories
One Gem
by Ana Lloren
(0917-8533358)
Shoes Janylin

The big tease

Shape-shifter
Red venetian lace bra with matching boy shorts, re-embroidered with Swarovski crystals; red Lycra opera gloves

By Alex Y. Vergara

WHO WOULD HAVE thought that in this day and age of easy and unlimited access to pirated DVDs and websites devoted to sexually explicit "adult" materials, Filipino men still prefer their women to refrain from going all the way—at least not immediately—during their "first night" in bed?

"It's all about the tease," says interior-turned-fashion designer Armando Fabia. "Pinoy men want to be teased, and their women are more than willing to play along."

Fabia has a thriving business in "sleep-optional" lingerie, made from such materials as stretched lace, tulle, velvet, chiffon, beads, synthetic fur and faux pearls, to prove it. By being sleep-optional, the made-to-measure lingerie is better seen (in private, of course) than slept in.

In their desire to make their first night as man and wife more memorable, a growing number of today's couples have no qualms about reliving their sexual fantasies in the kinkiest and most imaginative of costumes. Women, of course, play a bigger, decidedly sexier role than men.

What accounts for the growing popularity of such role-playing is a story in itself. Fabia can only assume that his clients want this particular night in their married lives to stand out because not a few of them have already done it while going steady.

Such fetishes, from wearing decorative garter belts (there are no silk stockings to hold up) to slipping into a pair of opera gloves (some men want to experience the velvet "touch"), would have probably made the women's late grandmothers (and spinster aunts!) turn in their graves.

"You'll be surprised at how well-researched some brides are," says Fabia. "They bring pictures of old Hollywood stars in various stages of undress as their inspiration. Sometimes, it's the men who make suggestions on what lingerie they want their future wives to wear."

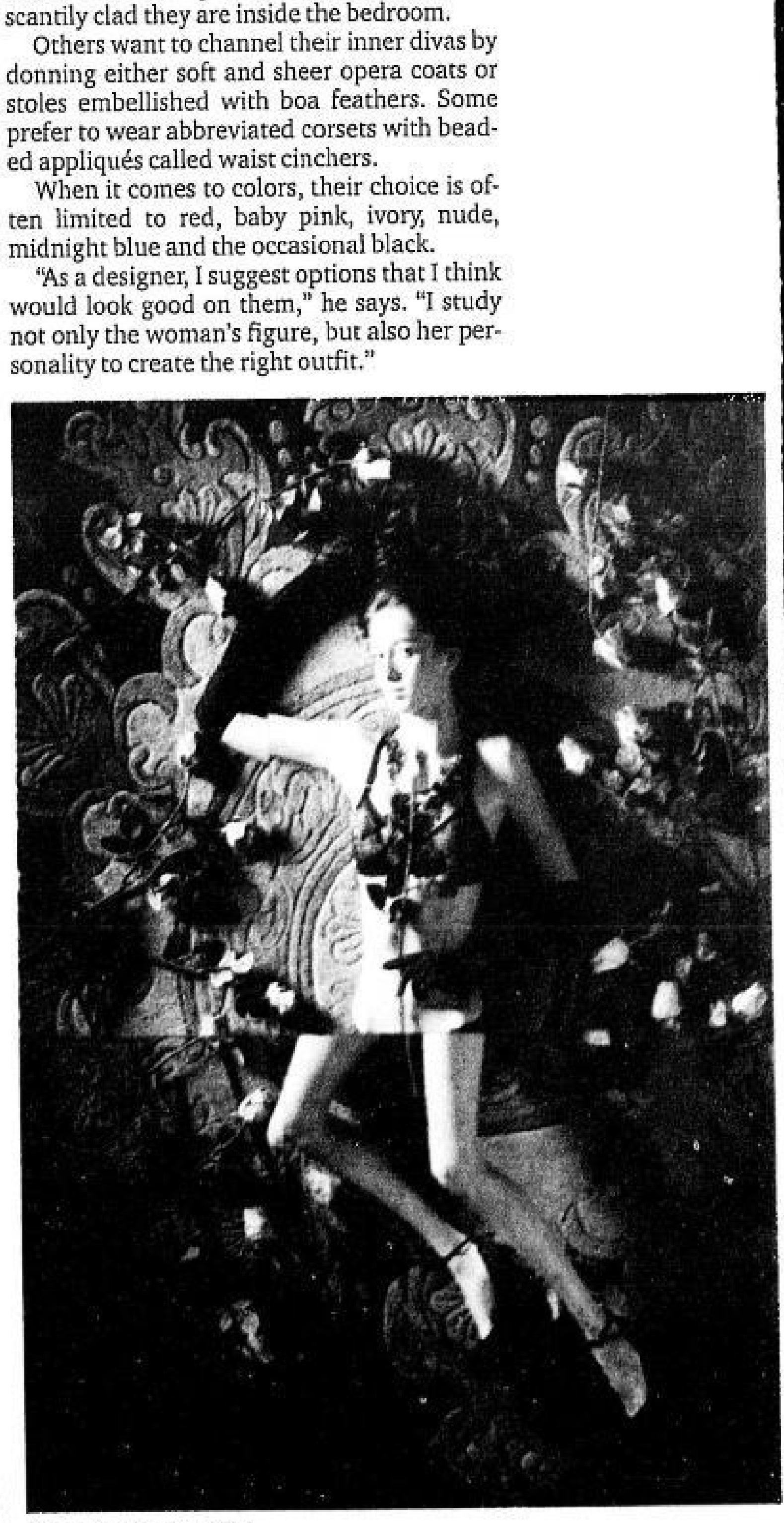
Majority of brides, says Fabia, want to look either "fresh or sophisticated" no matter how scantily clad they are inside the bedroom.

Others want to channel their inner divas by donning either soft and sheer opera coats or stoles embellished with boa feathers. Some prefer to wear abbreviated corsets with beaded appliqués called waist cinchers.

When it comes to colors, their choice is often limited to red, baby pink, ivory, nude, midnight blue and the occasional black.

"As a designer, I suggest options that I think would look good on them," he says. "I study not only the woman's figure, but also her personality to create the right outfit."

Twin peaks
White cotton Lycra brassier and panty, encrusted with minute Austrian crystals; black stretch lace cardigan edged in velvet



Rose parade
Black stretch mesh bra traced with minute Swarovski crystals with matching black mesh thong

Interior-turned-fashion designer Armando Fabia has a thriving business in 'sleep-optional' lingerie made from luxurious, exotic materials

He has yet to encounter a wannabe dominatrix who's dead serious in wearing a black leather cat suit with matching whip and studs in lieu of a sheer baby-doll ensemble made of lace and embellished with pearls. For now, at least, the letters S and M are thankfully confined to the country's leading mall chain, and have yet to catch on as a boudoir look.

More often than not, Fabia dresses women up in partially sheer materials that are guaranteed to further titillate their husbands. For some reason, the act of obscuring certain, ah, body parts (if only a little) further drives men crazy, he says.

Such a Pinoy penchant for titillation also explains the popularity of nipple caps (think Janet Jackson's puny breast coverage in her infamous "wardrobe malfunction" episode in the US Superbowl) with de rigueur beaded tassels and "capless" bras with underwire support.

The latter, Fabia explains, helps give breasts some lift underneath a sheer nightgown or a wedding dress with a plunging neckline.

Apart from his constant dealings with female clients, Fabia's background as a fine arts graduate from University of Santo Tomas has enabled him to fully understand a woman's body.

"Those anatomy classes have certainly come in handy," he says with a wink.

Big challenge

But getting ideas that drive men wild (or wilder than usual) is totally different. Fabia, admittedly, is the least bit informed about such matters.

"I do my research on the ground," says the openly gay designer. Short of peeking into the bedrooms of married couples, "I interview men and ask them what they find sexy in a woman. One of the biggest challenges I've had to hurdle was to get into a man's psyche."

Wallflowers (and budding feminists) who plan to chuck their bras in a last-ditch attempt to hook a man, please take heed. Majority of Pinoy men, says Fabia, are turned off by such flagrant displays of sexuality.

Pinoy men may be fast when it comes to getting women to say yes, but most of them still prefer to thread gingerly when it comes to unwrapping the "package."

"Doing small articles of clothing is harder than it seems," he says. "Not only do I have to get the fit right, I also have to think of countless ways to make each ensemble unique from the other."

In fact, Fabia saw a need for specially designed bras and lingerie while attending to his brides. He still designs mainstream clothes, from bridal gowns to cocktail dresses, office wear to resort apparel.

Actually, designing lingerie has been a complete turnaround from what he originally set out to do after putting his interior-designing career on hold a little over 10 years ago. He started in the fashion biz doing men's clothes before venturing into bridal gowns.

Brides would later come to the designer asking him where they could get intimate but classy apparel. The best he could do was point them to such expensive department store brands as Wacoal.

"Somehow, ready-to-wear lingerie and brassieres weren't enough," he says. "I started doing silk robes, which I first gave away for free as gifts to my brides. Before long, I expanded the line by doing intimate apparel."

Epiphany

Fabia experienced another epiphany sometime last year when he did a fashion show in New York City. During a lull in the rehearsals, he went to La Perla's flagship store and was surprised at the range of possibilities (and materials used!) one could do with intimate wear.

"I was amazed at the number of permutations one could do with lingerie," he says.

Right there and then, Fabia realized that he was barely scratching the surface when it came to addressing the illusions of his imaginative clients.

Like them, he was intrigued at unraveling the many layers and nuances that make up a young segment in Philippine fashion called intimate wear. He went out of the store and into the cold streets of Manhattan with a six-word mantra playing in his head: "It is all about the tease."

E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph

MARITHÉ + François Girbaud sows seeds of peace.

FASHION BUZZ

Hot, haute, hot news!

Fashion for a cause

IT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE TO COMbine fashion flair with an altruistic spirit. Marithé + François Girbaud, for one, has denounced war, as part of a long-term strategy designed to address adults who are aware of the world around them and concerned about the future of the planet.

Marithé + Francois Girbaud is talking about rebuilding, opening up, sharing, exchanging and using a communications strategy that appeals to reason and to the children of tomorrow.

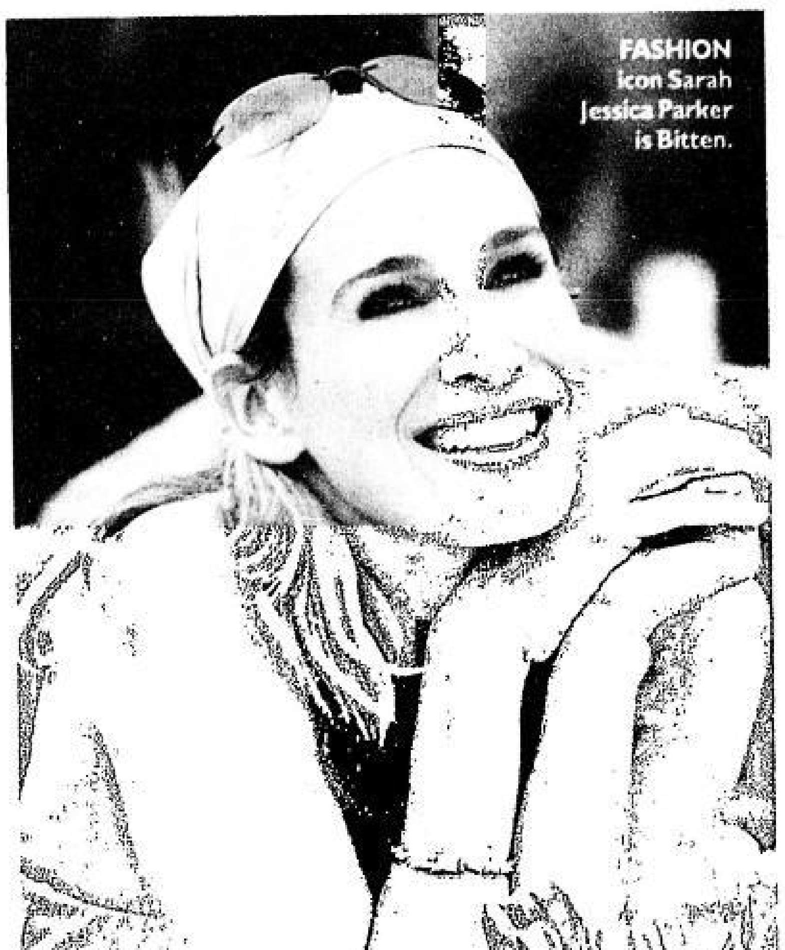
The brand's summer 2007 campaign features a dozen teenagers originating from places like Israel, Lebanon, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, the Ivory Coast and Tibet. These young people bring the brand to life, as they represent the future with beauty while sowing the seeds of peace.

To further the brand's message and give it more depth, Marithé + François Girbaud has partnered with "Seeds of Peace" (SoP), a nonprofit organization founded by American Journalist John Wallach and supported by famous names like Bill Clinton, Queen Noor of Jordan and Shimon Peres.

The organization has created a process to sow seeds of peace in the hearts of teenagers who have lived in regions of conflict, particularly the Middle East, since their birth. The objective of SoP is to establish a dialogue and show that young people around the world share the same hopes and desires to achieve personal fulfillment, and the determination to build the foundations for a peaceful future.

Marithé + François Girbaud has committed itself to supporting these efforts, associating its communications with the work of SoP and putting its talents at the service of the organization by creating a range of new merchandising tools.

SoP will be present at future events at the stores in New York, Paris and Tokyo, and will form an integral part of the brand's future communication campaigns.



FASHION icon Sarah Jessica Parker is Bitten.

Egalitarian fashion

FIRST THERE WAS KATE MOSS and Topshop. Then came Madonna and H&M. This time, the latest fashion/celebrity collaboration is between Sarah Jessica Parker of "Sex and the City" fame, and Steve and Barry's, a retail chain that offers premium clothing at very affordable prices.

Sarah Jessica Parker may clad herself in designer duds and pricey Blahniks, but she firmly believes that "fashion is not a luxury, it's a right!"

As such, her clothing lined called Bitten (her reaction when she first entered Steve and Barry's store) will consist of ultra-affordable, high-quality sportswear for women of all ages and sizes.

The initial collection will feature more than 150 styles and over 400 articles of clothing and accessories like lingerie, cashmere sweaters, dresses, denims, handbags, jewelry, belts and shoes. Each item will reportedly cost under US$20!

Expect long queues to form when Bitten debuts in Steve and Barry's stores on June 7.

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Witty, wearable and repetitive

Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

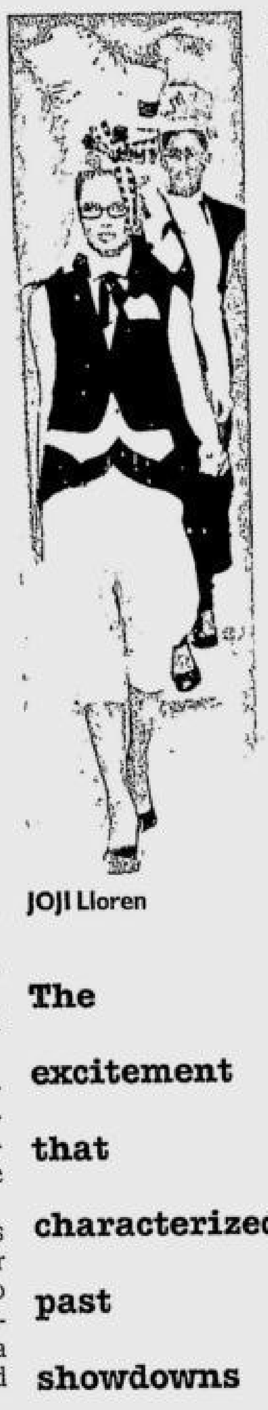
THE MOMENT THE FIRST model stepped out into the runway inside the Rockwell Tent, it was clear that the eagerly anticipated annual fashion show staged by members of the Young Designers' Group would never be the same again without three of its former and arguably best members: Dennis Lustico, Ivar Aseron and Joey Samson.

Cheers punctuated the collections of certain members every now and then, but the excitement that characterized past showdowns was noticeably less palpable this time around.

Like members of the defunct Puerto Rican pop band Menudo, members of YDG graduate from the group soon after they hit 36 (oops, there goes your secret, guys). But despite Lustico and company's absence, fashion, like life itself, did manage to find a way to flourish and reinvent itself last Monday evening.

Without a doubt, YDG remains one of the brightest spots in a long and at times arduous "Philippine Fashion Week" that showcased not a few of the usual suspects that give fashion a bad name.

Save for a number of featured guest designers and former members led by Joji Lloren, the YDG show was composed mostly of relative newbies.


JOJI Lloren

The excitement that characterized past showdowns of the Young Designers' Group was noticeably less palpable this time around

Speaking of the esteemed Lloren, his attempt to wing it by fashioning impeccably tailored (but tired, tired, tired!) and deconstructed black and white pieces didn't quite make the grade.

Not when Lloren himself and countless wannabes have ventured into such familiar terrain a thousand times before. The cuckoo styling consisting of top hats and horn-rimmed glasses all the more emphasized a certain disconnect between the clothes and their wearers. Snap out of it, Joji!

Flesh, flattering

On a brighter note, among the evening's freshest and most flattering ideas (unless I failed to see similar versions in Style.com and back issues of Vogue) came from the likes of James Reyes, Brian Leyva, Louis Claparols and LZ Punzalan.

Indeed, gone are the days when members make clothes for themselves and not for their customers. If it was any indication of progress (and maturity!), majority of the designers, with the notable exception of John Herrera, made wearable pieces that were surprisingly far from boring.

To Herrera's credit, however, despite bucking the trend by insisting on larger-than-life silhouettes in the form of ball gowns with huge petticoats, he was wise enough to fashion boxy jackets, boleros and skirts that could be worn as separates.

He went for a dark, worn-out look that gave his deconstructed pieces made of duchess satin, denim, canvas and even hand-painted upholstery a grungy, escape-from-the-dungeon vibe.

Hell, if I were a woman who was able to slip past her tormentors during one brief moment of confusion, I'd be happy, too, regardless of the tattered rag that covered my back.

Ferdi Abuel and Mitzi Quilendrino also managed to hold their own, but their insistence on sticking to permutations of a single look (Leyva was equally guilty) via similar detailing, fabrication and construction somehow hobbled their respective efforts.

It would have been totally understandable to underscore a particular look or statement had they each been limited to show three outfits, but not when they were asked to present six to eight clothes. If anything, line design betrayed a lack of imagination and creativity.

A number of designers (Carlo Jequinto with his dress-with-a-head-piece easily comes to mind) also made flagrant references to Balenciaga—past and present—that would have probably made Cristobal spin in his grave and heir apparent Nicholas Ghesquier turn in his sleep.

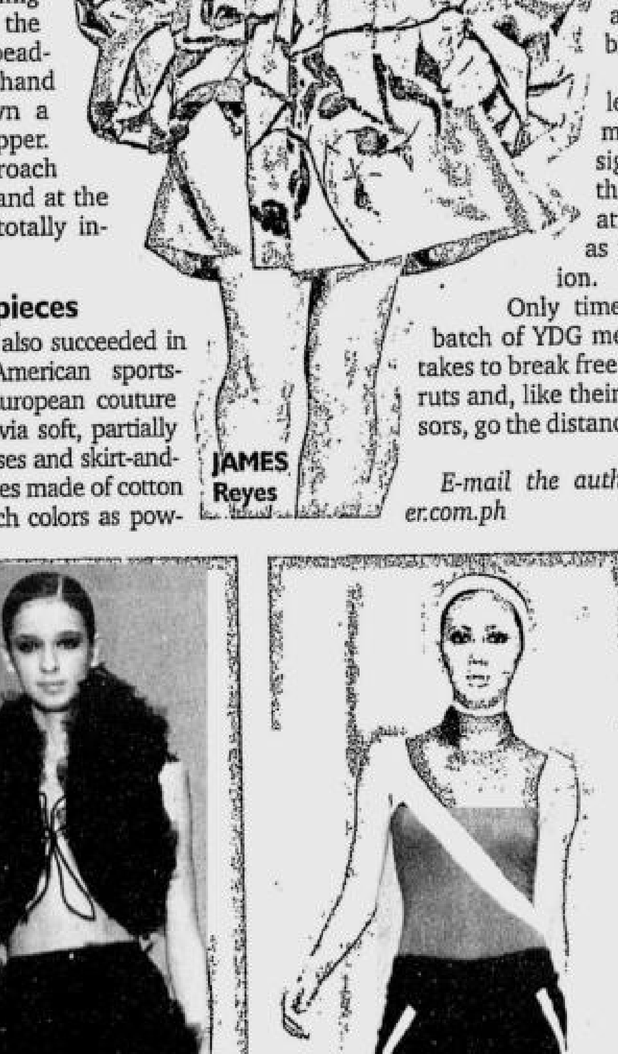
Indeed, less, more often than not, is more. Reyes made a 180-degree turn by leaving his avant-garde, "grieving widow" phase behind (thank goodness!) in favor of the simplest black and white trapeze and shift dresses made of satin and taffeta.

The designer's homage to pop art and graphic design resulted in a collection that teemed with wit, eliciting smiles from even the most jaded of fashionistas.

His witticisms included contrasting silhouettes of a cat, tea set, chandelier (complete with dangling elements in the form of beadwork) and a hand pulling down a supposed zipper. The approach was stylish and at the same time totally in-your-face.

Versatile pieces

Claparols also succeeded in balancing American sportswear and European couture sensibilities via soft, partially draped dresses and skirt-and-top ensembles made of cotton jersey in such colors as powder blue, heather gray and pale brown.


JAMES Reyes

Apart from their versatility, Claparols' clingy outfits flattered the female figure (now, if only some models stayed longer in the gym). Alas, certain details, particularly the draping and ruching evident in his skirts, tended to repeat themselves.

Punzalan also did interesting but wearable pieces made primarily of rayon, cotton and unhemmed nylon fabrics with a mesh effect in the most iridescent shades. He was able to achieve the necessary shapes and structure through a bit of draping, tucking and random darting.

Leyva's collection, which consisted of tailored dresses made from numerous angular panels and patchwork in satin, cotton and mesh, was easily one of the crowd's favorites, until it degenerated into one of the evening's versions of a broken record titled "Once More with Feeling."

Despite this obvious lapse, though, Leyva deserves praise for coming up with a clean, superbly constructed (even up close!) collection in striking earth tones. His work reminds me a bit of the earlier pieces of Lloren and Samson (and I mean that as a compliment).

Quilendrino obviously put in a great deal of time and effort into her clothes, and it showed. The collection's defining element was evident in several decorative jackets, belts and faux bra tops made from strips of satin and horsehair in the most subdued shades. Then again, as in Leyva's case, her attempt at repetition proved to be too much of a good idea.

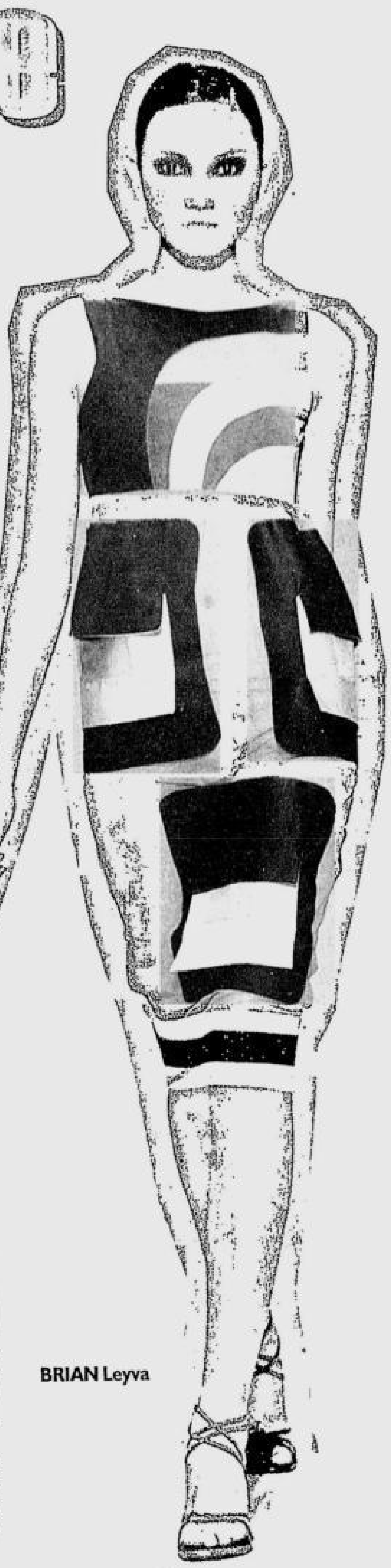
Abuel also did a number of striking and finely constructed pieces in plum, chocolate, mauve and bronze that made use of such shiny fabrics as satin, shantung, taffeta and Thai silk.

With only a pleated organza ruffle to tie the pieces together as a collection, Abuel managed to come up with mature dresses teeming with romantic undertones. There were certain pieces, however, that appeared shapeless, boring and (that R word again) a bit repetitive.

Of course, a single collection isn't enough to make or break a real designer. As in all professions that require loads of creativity, you're only as good as your last outfit in fashion.

Only time can tell if this year's batch of YDG members have got what it takes to break free from occasional creative ruts and, like their accomplished predecessors, go the distance.

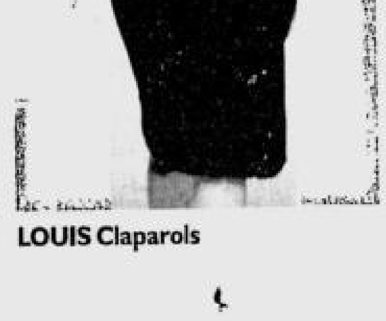
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer.com.ph


BRIAN Leyva

JOHN Herrera

CARLO Jequinto

SYLVER Custorio


LOUIS Claparols

FERDI Abuel

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LIFE-STYLED
Thelma Sioson San Juan

'Heritage resort' rises in Ilocos

Sitio Remedios in Currimao, Ilocos Norte—there's no place like it in the country

TWO WEEKS AGO, WE GOT our summer break earlier than expected, in a place we had always been fond of—Ilocos.

Through the years Ilocos has provided us rich stories (including ghost stories) and even richer experiences: Irene and Greggy Araneta's wedding in Sarrat; the centuries-old houses of Vigan, now a Unesco World Heritage site; our magazine colleague Joseph Uy finding himself sleeping on the same bed that Tom Cruise had slept on at Villa Angela during the shoot of Oliver Stone's "Born on the Fourth of July"; the mind-boggling grand architecture of the Ilocos churches, particularly of Sta. Maria Church with its grand steps and the old graveyard behind it; and the Bantay tower on which Angel Aquino, then a budding model, stood in a Ramon Valera *kimona*, photographed before sunrise by Neal Oshima for what has since become a classic Metro cover, etc.

But a new Ilocos attraction is bound to be even more memorable: a manmade *sitio* by the sea, complete with a plaza, a chapel and old houses.

Sitio Remedios is a 18,000-sq-m sprawl along the South China Sea in Currimao, Ilocos Norte.

It recreates a village of mid-20th century Ilocos. As far as we know, there's no place like it in the country.

The *sitio* is a beach-front property of Dr. Joven Cuanang, medical director of St. Luke's Medical Center. Last year he decided to develop it into a mid-century Ilocos Norte village.

Saving memories

Asked why he did it, he replied, "Because they're taking away my childhood memories." He added: "More and more, traditions are dying, artifacts and antiques are being taken away. I don't like the idea of bringing things out of the country."

A graduate of University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay Memorial school of medicine and Harvard Medical School, Dr. Cuanang has nurtured a passion for art since his youth; in fact, he has leading art galleries.

Born in Batac in the neighborhood of Ferdinand Marcos, Dr. Cuanang and his two siblings were orphaned early. His mother, Remedios, was a schoolteacher; she died when he was only 15.

Dr. Cuanang has lovely memories of the beaches along Currimao, where his family would go on weekends and holidays.

By building Sitio Remedios late last year, the physician has preserved his memories of a genteel past. The wooded gates of the Sitio, named after his mother and dedicated to Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage and Nuestra Señora de los Remedios, open to a grand walkway of old bricks, flanked by pools filled with azucao lotus plants indigenous to Paoay.

The 14 Stations of the Cross are engraved on cement plinths lining the path.

Going up the steps at the end of the walkway, you get a sweeping view of the *sitio*—the plaza, the chapel made of rough concrete shaded by centuries-old trees, and the six houses replicating the Ilocos homes of old—each structure a labor of love by Dr. Cuanang and his architect, Rex Hofilena.

The chapel, a replica of Paoay church, is the heart of the plaza. Dramatically lit at night, it sets the romantic mood of the place. Inside are massive wooden benches and side altars honoring St. Anthony de Padua and Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage.

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See posters and flyers for details.

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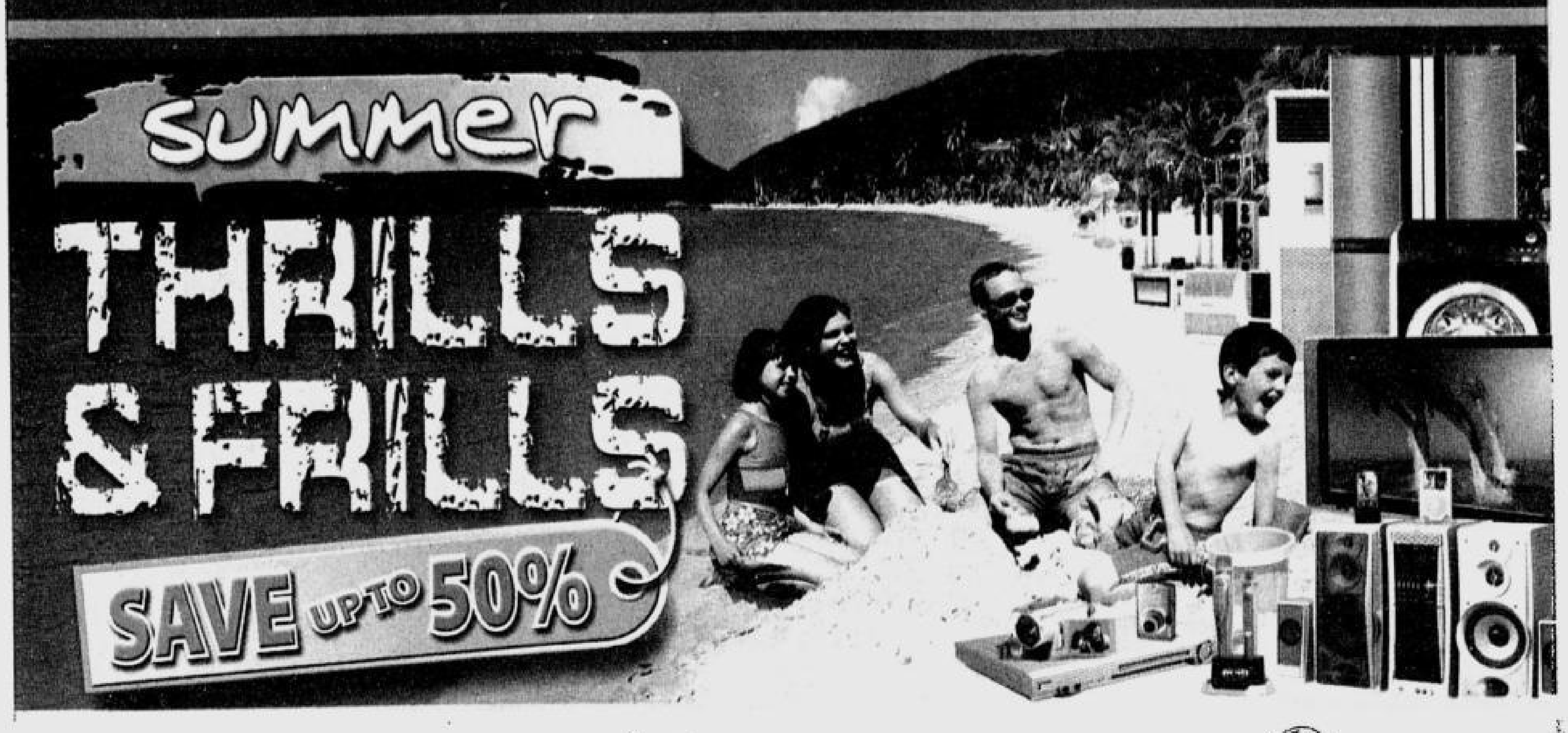

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P1,349.58
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Less P500 on Cash Purchase

SANYO

SA-186P
- 2.0HP [18,200 kJ/h]
- EER: 9.3 kJ/Wh

SRP: P20,995
P1,749.58
12 mos. 0%

2.0 HP

FREE Coffee Maker OR 16" Stand Fan
(FOR CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE ONLY)

Panasonic

FREE Decorative Frame + Mug Set

CW-SC183EPH
- 2.0 HP [19,900 kJ/h]
- EER: 10.5 kJ/Wh

SRP: P22,599
P1,883.25
12 mos. 0%

koppel

FREE WESTERN BOTTLE

1KY201817M-PH
- 2.0 HP [18,990 kJ/h]
- EER: 10.5 kJ/Wh

SRP: P22,895
P3,815.83
6 mos. 0%

FEDDERS

FREE COFFEE MAKER

1FE1009N7F-PH
- 1.0 HP [9,495 kJ/h]

SRP: P22,395
P3,732.50
6 mos. 0%

koppel

FREE COFFEE MAKER

1KE424N7C-PH
- 2.5 HP [22,683 kJ/h]

SRP: P39,695
P6,615.83
6 mos. 0%

Panasonic

INVERTER

CS/CU-S12GKQ
- 1.5 HP [11,630 kJ/h]
- EER: 13.6 kJ/Wh

SRP: P36,499
P3,041.58
12 mos. 0%

FREE Installation Package (1st 10ft copper tubing) + Sports Bag Set

imarflex

Package Type

▶IAC-300P (3HP) [25,320kJ/h]	▶IAC-450P (4.5HP) [37,980kJ/h]
SRP: P49,990	SRP: P59,990
P4,165.83	P4,999.17
12 mos. 0%	12 mos. 0%

FREE 13ft. INSTALLATION MATERIALS (UP TO JUNE 30, 2007 ONLY.) + RICE COOKER

ULTRA COOLING POWER

Carrier

FLOOR STANDING

MODEL	Cooling Capacity (kJ/h)	E.E.R. (kJ/W-hr)	S.R.P.
ASBFM360BA	37,980 [3.0 TR]	9.2	P52,308

P 8,718.00
6 mos. 0%

MODEL	Cooling Capacity (kJ/h)	E.E.R. (kJ/W-hr)	S.R.P.
ASBFE600BA	63,300 [5.0 TR]	9.8	P75,558

P12,593.00
6 mos. 0%

koppel

Floor Mounted Split Type
- Sleek design - Electronic display - Filter check indicators

FREE COFFEE MAKER

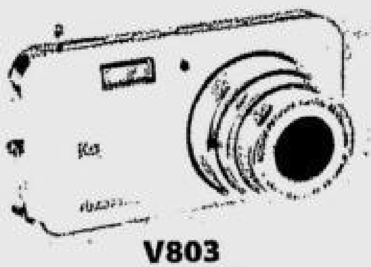
	SRP	6 mos. 0%
SL-36A (3.0 TR) [37,980kJ/h]	P 50,795	P 8,465.83
vertical SL-60A (5.0 TR) [63,300kJ/h]	P 76,695	P 12,782.50

GIFT CERTIFICATE WESTERN

available for as low as P500 WESTERN GIFT CERTIFICATES

Per DTI-NCR Permit # 0768, Series of 2007

Kodak



V803
- 8 MP - 3x Optical Zoom
- 2.5" LCD - Contiuous MPEG-4 Video w/ Audio
- Panoramic Mode

V803 COLORS:

SRP: P16,995
P1,416.25
12 mos. 0%

FREE
1GB SD Card
V-Camera Case

Canon

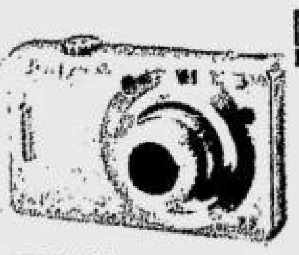
NEW

Digital IXUS 900 Ti
- 10 Megapixels in an elegant titanium casing
- 3x Optical zoom w/ safety zoom
- 2.5" LCD

FREE
Camera Case
Strap
SD512 Card

SRP: P29,950
P2,495.83
12 mos. 0%

SONY



PROMO E + FREEBIES
KK-LC3 (Cleaning Kit)
Shooting Tips* DVD
Neckstrap*

DSC-W55
- Effective 7.2 Mega Pixel
- High Sensitivity ISO1000
- 2.5" LCD
- Carl Zeiss Vario-Tessar Lens
- Real Imaging Processor
- 56MB Internal Memory

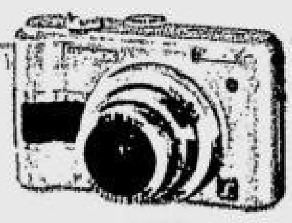
P 1,111.06
18 mos 0%
P 19,999

CYBER-SHOT PROMO E

Payment Terms	18 mos 0%	12 mos 0%	CASH
Cyber-shot Accessory GC	P1,000	P1,000	P1,000
Printer GC	P5,000	P5,000	P5,000
HDPS GC	P5,000	P5,000	P5,000
GPS GC		P2,000	P2,000
NWWM GC / CDWM / ICD Recorder		P1,000	P1,000
Memory Stick GC		P1,500	P1,500
Add on GC			P2,000
Upgrade Your Skills DVD & Neckstrap*	FREE	FREE	FREE

*For Upgrade Your Skills DVD & Neckstrap, pls fill-up the Business Reply card inside the unit's box; send the card to us and we will send you the DVD & Neckstrap at no cost!

Panasonic

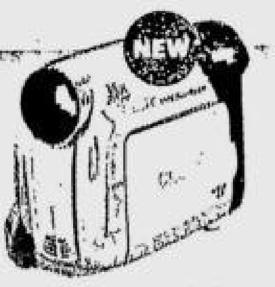


DMC-LZ3
- 5 Mega-pixel Still Camera
- 6x Optical Zoom
- 2.0" LCD Display

FREE
512mb SD Card
Free Camera Pouch

SRP: P11,999
P499.95
24 mos. 0%

Canon



NEW

ZR800
MINI DV CAMCORDER
- 680k pixels, 1/6" Sensor - 35x optical zoom
- Electronic Image Stabilizer (EIS)

FREE
Video Case
(1) DVM-E60
Tripod

SRP: P19,950
P1,662.50
12 mos. 0%

SONY

PROMO C + FREEBIES
Body Bag
Pouch
3pcs. DV Tapes
Cleaning Tape

DCR-HC48
- 1/6" 1.1 Mega Pixels CCD
- CZ Vario-Tessar Lens (30mm)
- 25x Optical Zoom, 2000x Digital Zoom
- 2.7 inch Wide Hybrid LCD Monitor
- Memory Stick Duo Slot

P1,944.39
18 mos 0%
P 34,999

HANDYCAM PROMO C

Payment Terms	18 mos 0%	12 mos 0%	CASH
Handycam Accessory GC	P2,000	P4,000	P4,000
Photo Printer GC / HDPS GC	P5,000	P5,000	P5,000
Skills DVD & Passport Holder*	FREE	FREE	FREE
DVD Direct & HDD/DVD Rec. GC		P10,000	P10,000
Memory Stick GC		P1,500	P1,500
Add on GC			P4,000

*For Upgrade Your Skills DVD & Passport Holder, pls fill-up the Business Reply card inside the unit's box; send the card to us and we will send you the DVD & Passport Holder at no cost!

Panasonic

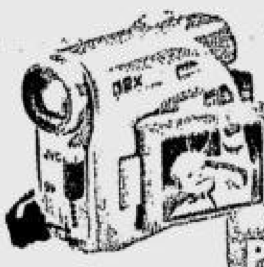
PV-GS29
- 30x Optical Zoom - 2.5" LCD
- S.I.S. (Super Image Stabilizer)

FREE
Camera Bag + Tripod

FREE DV1000 & Mini DV Tape *until supply last

SRP: P18,999
P791.63
24 mos. 0%

JVC



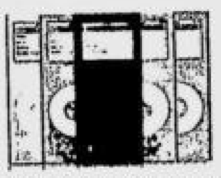
GR-D370U
- 32x optical zoom
- 800x digiatl zoom
- 2.5" Clear LCD
- Night alive data battery
- Power linked operation

ADD P1,490 for this 20" CTV or less P5,000 on SRP
AV-20NN15

FREE Tripod, Bag, Tape, & Firewire

SRP: P27,990
P2,332.50
12 mos. 0%

iPod nano



A thinner design. Five stylish colors. A brighter display. Up to 24 hours of battery life. Just about the only thing that hasn't changed is the name.

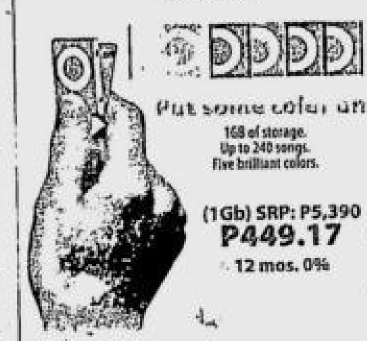
(8Gb) SRP: P15,490
P1,290.83
12 mos. 0%

(4Gb) SRP: P12,690
P1,057.50
12 mos. 0%

(2Gb) SRP: P9,390
P782.50
12 mos. 0%

iPod shuffle

One size fits all.
Ready to wear.
Remix and match.



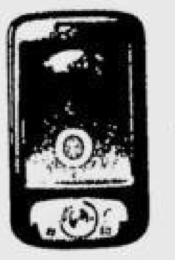
Put some color on.

1GB of storage.
Up to 240 songs.
Five brilliant colors.

(1Gb) SRP: P5,390
P449.17
12 mos. 0%

O2

FREE IR Keyboard & Leather Case (Atom Exec)



ATOM EXEC

- Intel XScale PXA 27x 520MHz - MS Windows Mobile 5.0 Software w/ Messaging & Security Feature Pack - Tri band EDGE phone, GSM/GPRS, Bluetooth, MiniSD Memory Card Slot, Wireless LAN, Mini USB connector, Infrared IrDA, 2.0 Mega-pixel Camera - 2.7" QVGA TFT LCD; 262K Colours - 64MB SDRAM / 196MB Flash Rom

SRP: P45,900
P 3,825.00
12 mos. 0%

MOTOROLA

FREE Moto Clock

RIZR Z3
(Black / Blue / Red)

- EDGE Phone - Quad-band: GSM 850/900/1800/1900 - 2 Megapixel Camera - 262K TFT Display, 30 x 37mm Screen - GPRS, Bluetooth, USB - 1000 Phonebook Entry - MicroSD Card Slot / 16MB Phone Memory

SRP: P16,900
P1,408.33
12 mos. 0%

Sony Ericsson

Gear Up

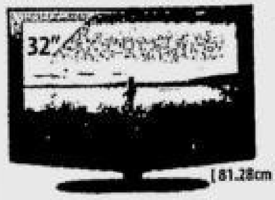
K610i
(Evening Red / Urban Silver / Misty White)
- UMTS 2100, GPRS 900/1800/1900
- 2.0 megapixel camera
- Bluetooth (with A2DP), USB 2.0
- Up to 16MB phone memory
- 64MB Memory Stick Micro (M2™)

Gear Up Your Sony Ericsson
Promo offers from March 16, 2007 to June 3, 2007

SRP: P13,500
P1,125.00
12 mos. 0%

SAMSUNG

CASH or STRAIGHT CHARGE
LESS P5,000 on SRP
BORDEAUX SERIES



32"
[81.28cm]

LA32R71B
DNIe 5000:1 Wall Mount WMTL4001
SRP: P69,900
P3,883.33
18 mos. 0%

ADD-ONS
[ON CASH BASIS ONLY]

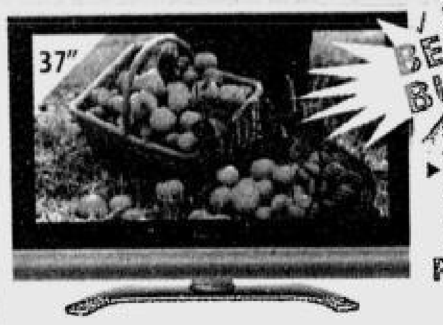
ADD P5,000
GET HT-Q20
Home Theater System
(Reg. Price P21,995)

ADD P15,000
GET HT-Q25
Home Theater System
(Reg. Price P29,995)

ADD P25,000
GET HT-XQ100
Home Theater System
(Reg. Price P42,995)

SHARP

37 inch LCD AQUOS



37"
BEST BUY!

- LC-37BX5M
Fast 6msec Response Time
SRP: P84,998
P7,083.17
12 mos. 0%

FREE
Wall Bracket & Installation
OR
ADD P1,999
for LCD Rack
(c/o Service Center)

SAVINGS TO THE MAX

LIMITED STOCKS ONLY

STILL & VIDEO CAMERAS ARE AVAILABLE AT WESTERN MEGAMALL, FESTIVAL MALL AND STA. LUCIA BRANCHES ONLY

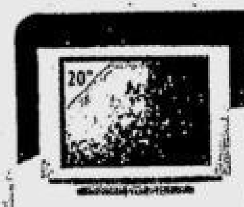
JVC

17"

LT-17AX5
17" LCD TV
Built-In Tuner
Progressive Scan
PC Input

BEFORE: P49,990
NOW: P27,995
SAVE: P21,995
P2,332.92
12 mos. 0%

SONY



20"

KLV-D20G10
20" B Series BRAVIA LCD TV
BEFORE: P69,990
NOW: P29,995
SAVE: P39,995

JUST ADD P999 Cash & GET:
DVPNS51P

P2,499.58
12 mos. 0%

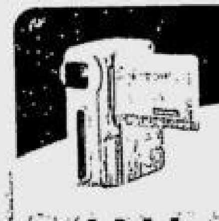
SONY

DCR-DVD905
DVD Digital Video Handycam w/ 4 Megapixel Still Image Recording
BEFORE: P69,999
NOW: P54,999
SAVE: P15,000

FREE
Body Bag
DVD R
DVD RW
DVD Case

P2,291.63
24 mos. 0%

SONY

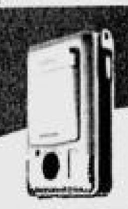


DCR-IP1
1.5" 1 Megapixel (Gross) Advanced HAD™ CCD Imager
BEFORE: P75,999
NOW: P19,999
SAVE: P56,000

FREE
Buddy Bag

P1,666.58
12 mos. 0%

BenQ



C610
6 Megapixel Digital Still Camera
BEFORE: P7,995
SRP: P6,395
SAVE: P1,600

FREE
SANYO Eneloop Rechargeable Batteries HR-3UTG 2BP-SP (AA x 2)

P532.92
12 mos. 0%

Canon

PowerShot S60
5.0 Megapixel Digital Still Camera
BEFORE: P34,500
NOW: P17,990
SAVE: P16,510

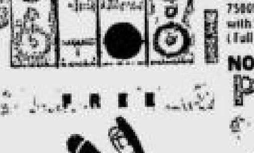
FREE
Camera Case
IP1500 Printer
256MB SD Card

P1,499.17
12 mos. 0%

KENWOOD

SYSTEM707
Digital Home Theater Package
BEFORE: P35,700
SRP: P24,000
SAVE: P11,700
P2,000.00
12 mos. 0%

Pioneer



EV-1000DVDX
7500W 5 Speaker System with Subwoofer (Full Karaoke)
BEFORE: P29,990
NOW: P20,990
SAVE: P9,000

FREE
Microphone (P1213)

P1,749.17
12 mos. 0%

Garant™ Summer SAVINGS!

BUY 1 GET 1 ITEM FREE

P999
GWP-333
Water Purifier
FREE 1 Western Bottle

P3,999
GWD-500
Floor Compressor Type Water Dispenser (Cold & Hot)
FREE 1 Western Bottle

P1,399
GOT-518
Oven Toaster (18 Liter)
FREE 1 Whistling Kettle (actual unit may vary)

P599
GRC-820S
Rice Cooker (1.0 Liter)
FREE 1 Microwaveable Containers (actual unit may vary)

P849
GRJ-888S
Jar Rice Cooker (1.8 Liter)
FREE 1 Microwaveable Containers (actual unit may vary)

P599
GGS-3000
Gas Stove (Dual) Teflon
FREE 1 Regulator

P650
GGS-5000
Gas Stove (Dual) Stainless
FREE 1 Regulator

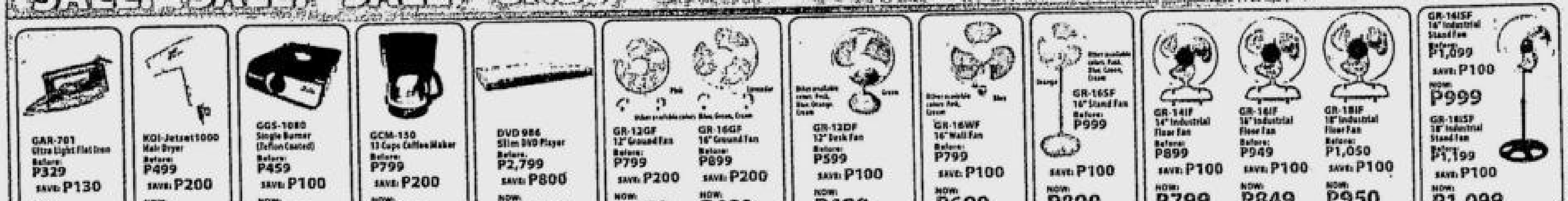
P329
GCWK-1000
Cordless Kettle
FREE 1 Mug (actual unit may vary)

P699
GRB-808/C
Blender
OR
FREE 1 Mug (actual unit may vary)

P799
GCS-7
7-pc. Cookware Set
FREE 1 Slotted Turner (actual image may vary)

P299
LWK-30
Whistling Kettle
FREE 1 Mug (actual unit may vary)

SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE! SALE!



GAR-701
Ultra Light Flat Iron
Before: P329
SAVE: P130
NOW: P199

KOI-Jetset1000
Hair Dryer
Before: P499
SAVE: P200
NOW: P299

GGS-1080
Single Burner (Teflon Coated)
Before: P459
SAVE: P100
NOW: P359

GCM-130
13 Cups Coffee Maker
Before: P799
SAVE: P200
NOW: P599

DVD 986
Slim DVD Player
Before: P2,799
SAVE: P800
NOW: P1,999

GR-12GF
12" Ground Fan
Before: P799
SAVE: P200
NOW: P599

GR-16GF
16" Ground Fan
Before: P899
SAVE: P200
NOW: P699

GR-12DF
12" Desk Fan
Before: P599
SAVE: P100
NOW: P499

GR-16WF
16" Wall Fan
Before: P799
SAVE: P100
NOW: P699

GR-16SF
16" Stand Fan
Before: P999
SAVE: P100
NOW: P899

GR-14IF
14" Industrial Floor Fan
Before: P899
SAVE: P100
NOW: P799

GR-16IF
16" Industrial Floor Fan
Before: P949
SAVE: P100
NOW: P849

GR-18IF
18" Industrial Floor Fan
Before: P1,050
SAVE: P100
NOW: P950

GR-16ISF
16" Industrial Stand Fan
Before: P1,099
SAVE: P100
NOW: P999

GR-18ISF
18" Industrial Stand Fan
Before: P1,199
SAVE: P100
NOW: P1,099

Experience Shopping Thrills & Frills At Any Of Our 14 Branches.

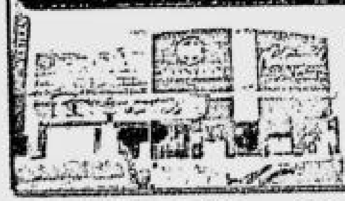
COMMONWEALTH

- Ground Floor, Ever Gotesco, Commonwealth Ave., Batasan Hills, Quezon City
- Tel: 931-5650 / 931-5996
- Fax: 931-5669

FARMERS' ANNEX

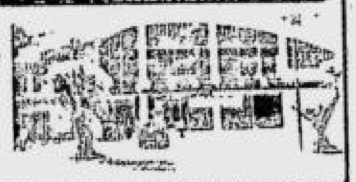
- 16 General Araneta Avenue, Farmers Market, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-0771/ 439-0060
- Fax: 911-2585

GREENHILLS



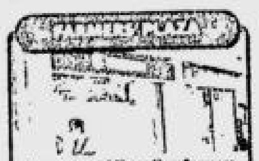
- 12 Missouri St., Northeast Greenhills, San Juan
- Tel: 726-6115
  726-7855
  727-2969
- Fax: 727-4187

MAKATI



- 1028 Arnaiz Ave. (formerly Pasay Road) corner Ponce Street, Makati City
- Tel: 889-8746 to 48
  817-9506
- Fax: 889-8749

FARMERS' PLAZA



- Upper Ground Floor, New Farmers Plaza, Araneta Center, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-1915/ 995-8714
- Fax: 911-1917

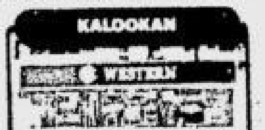
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL

- 3rd Floor, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City
- Tel: 842-1327/ 850-3746
- Fax: 850-3758

GRAND CENTRAL

- Upper Ground Floor, Ever Gotesco, Grand Central Complex, Rizal Ave. Ext., Kalookan City
- Tel: 364-5341/ 364-5383/ 363-3623
- Fax: 366-4502

KALOOKAN



- 747 Rizal Avenue Extension, Kalookan City
- Tel: 361-6657/ 330-0371/
  361-2766
- Fax: 361-2751

MEGAMALL

- Bldg. A, Lower Ground Flr., SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City
- Tel: 634-1733/ 634-6532/
  635-2071
- Fax: 638-4210

P. TUAZON

- 178 P. Tuazon Boulevard corner 8th Avenue, Cubao, Quezon City
- Tel: 911-5551/ 912-7829/
  913-2577
- Fax: 911-5553

C. M. RECTO

- 1421-1425 C.M. Recto Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila
- Tel: 711-5671 to 74/
  712-6295 to 98
- Fax: 711-5675

STA. LUCIA EAST MALL

- Phase 3, Basement Level, Sta. Lucia East Grand Mall, Marcos Highway, Cainta, Rizal
- Tel: 645-1582/ 646-1415/
  645-1961/ 645-1759
- Fax: 645-8396

STA. ROSA CITY, LAGUNA

- 2nd Floor, Target Mall, Balibago, Sta. Rosa City, Laguna
- Tel: (49) 534-3028
- Fax: (02) 886-1514

MAIN OFFICE (Q.C.)

- 34 Morato St., San Francisco Del Monte Quezon City
- Tel: 373-4501 to 05/ 371-0430/
  371-0441
- Fax: 414-9075/ 412-8711

GOINGS ON

Ballet at the mall

SHANGRI-LA PLAZA CAPS ITS WOMEN'S MONTH celebration with a musical-dance performance by ballerina Lisa Macuja and Ballet Manila on Saturday at the Grand Atrium, Level 2. Macuja will be performing Dalagang Pilipina, Arachnida, Act 2 Swan Lake Adagio, Sayaw sa Pamlang and OPM Sayaw Pinoy, together with her company. Hailed as the "ballerina of the people," Macuja has received numerous citations for her achievements. In 1995, she helped create Ballet Manila. Macuja's performance will begin at 6:30 p.m. Call 6337851.

FORUM. St. Luke's Medical Center Movement Disorder Center is holding a Tourette Syndrome patients forum called "Twitch and Shout! A Closer Look at Tourette Syndrome" on March 31 at the CHBC 14th floor auditorium. TS is an inherited neurological disorder characterized by body movements (motor tics) and vocalizations (vocal tics) which are beyond the affected individual's control. Call 7230101 ext. 3101 or ext. 4215.

GRAND REUNION. High School Class 1982 of the Eulogio "Amang" Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology (EARIST Secondary Trades Department) is marking its 25th graduation anniversary with a grand reunion on March 31, 9 a.m., at the school gymnasium, EARIST Nagtahan, Sampaloc, Manila. Call Jose Name Jr., 09063670092/5529522; and Ma. Theresa Ramos Buclatin, 09175316698/5344612; or e-mail Roberto Brondo at brondz07@yahoo.com.

LENTEN EXHIBIT. The diocesan shrine of the Nuestra Senora de Aranzazu Parish in San Mateo, Rizal carries on its Lenten tradition by putting 61 holy images on an educational-devotional exhibit at the parish hall until April 1. Entitled "Debosyon at Kasaysayan," the pre-Holy Week exhibit has been held since 2002. A project of the parish council, the exhibit is supported by parish priest Msgr. Generoso Mediarito. Exhibit hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. daily.

MODELING WORKSHOP. The R.A.M.P. (Runway Acting Modeling Perfection) Summer Workshop will be held April 16-May 5. Workshop theme is Runway, Acting, Modeling, Perfection. It is run by model Kuku Trinidad. R.A.M.P. has no weight or height requirements and is open to men and women aged 15-28 years old. Slots are limited. R.A.M.P.' s web site is www.runwayandmodelingperfection.com. Call 7265611 or 09062124272.

SUMMER WORKSHOPS. The Museum of the Filipino People is holding the Summer Workshops Festival on April 26, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. The workshop covers arts, crafts and basic science. Deadline for registration is April 16. The museum (tel. 5270278) is at the Teodoro Valencia Circle, Ermita, Manila.

SEMINAR. The Philippine Society of Librarians and Information Specialist (PSLIS), in cooperation with Integrated Society of Information Professionals of the Philippines (ISIPP), will hold a seminar-workshop on "Development Program on Records and Information Management: The Standard Principles and Practice," April 25-27, at Lispher Inn, Davao City. Call Dory, 09184475796; Vangie, 09195180128; Medy, 8978808 local 329, 09178664357; Lyn, 7241994; or e-mail isipp_pslis@yahoo.com.

WRITING WORKSHOP. Tower Book House (tel. 8156925/4938) holds summer writing workshop for children aged 8-18. Registration is ongoing. The workshop tackles essay writing, feature writing, journalism, short story writing, and play writing. Windsor Tower is at 163 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City.

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OMEGA BEGINS 2007 WITH THE LAUNCH of the Co-Axial Chronoscope collection, a handsome and sportier addition to the elite De Ville family.

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For further information, contact Omega International Press Office at Rue Stämpfli 96, 2504 Bienne, Switzerland, tel. +41 323439211; fax +41 323439715; e-mail press@omega.ch; visit web site http://www.omegawatches.com. Omega is a company of the Swatch Group.

The Chronoscope has a bold, manly appeal and is expected to become a classic.

THE 80 *ikat* outfits in the show will range from casual to elegant gowns.

Ikat fashion show for Albay staged April 18

SHIRLEY DUQUE ALEJANDRINO will transform woven products from Narda Capuyan's looms into casual outfits and elegant gowns for the fabric and fashion event "Fibers of Life by Narda" on April 18 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Main Theater.

The designer will be creating 80 outfits made of *ikat* by Capuyan, who is based in La Trinidad, Benguet.

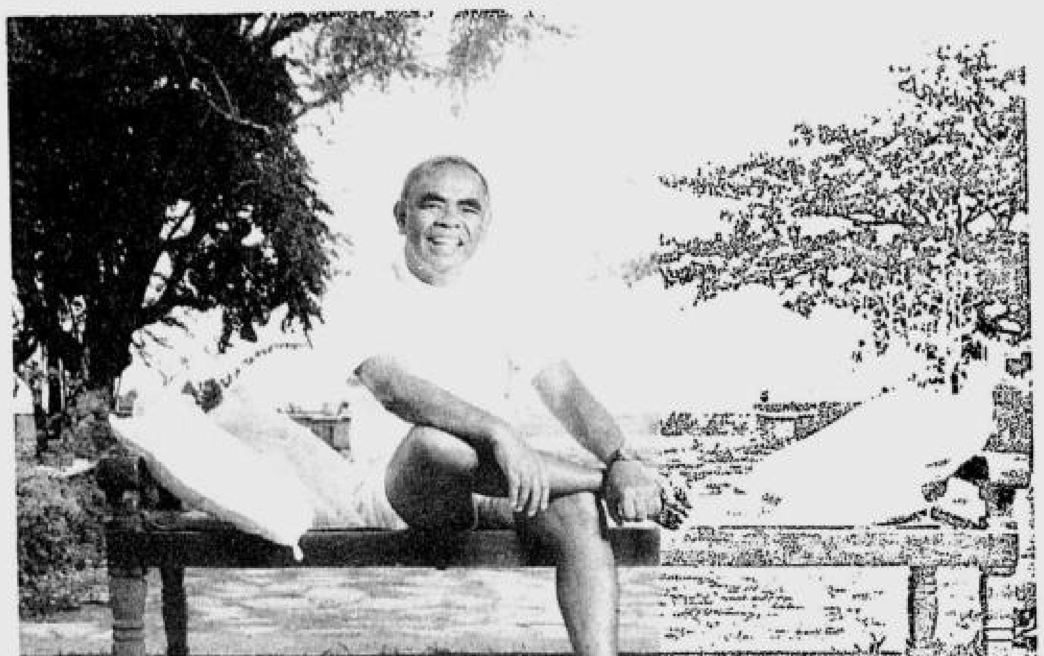
Using cotton as basic thread, Alejandrino said the weaver also integrated silk into her product.

Alejandrino is coming out with denim-piña jeans, and abaca bustiers. She is also picking up ideas from the Cordilleras.

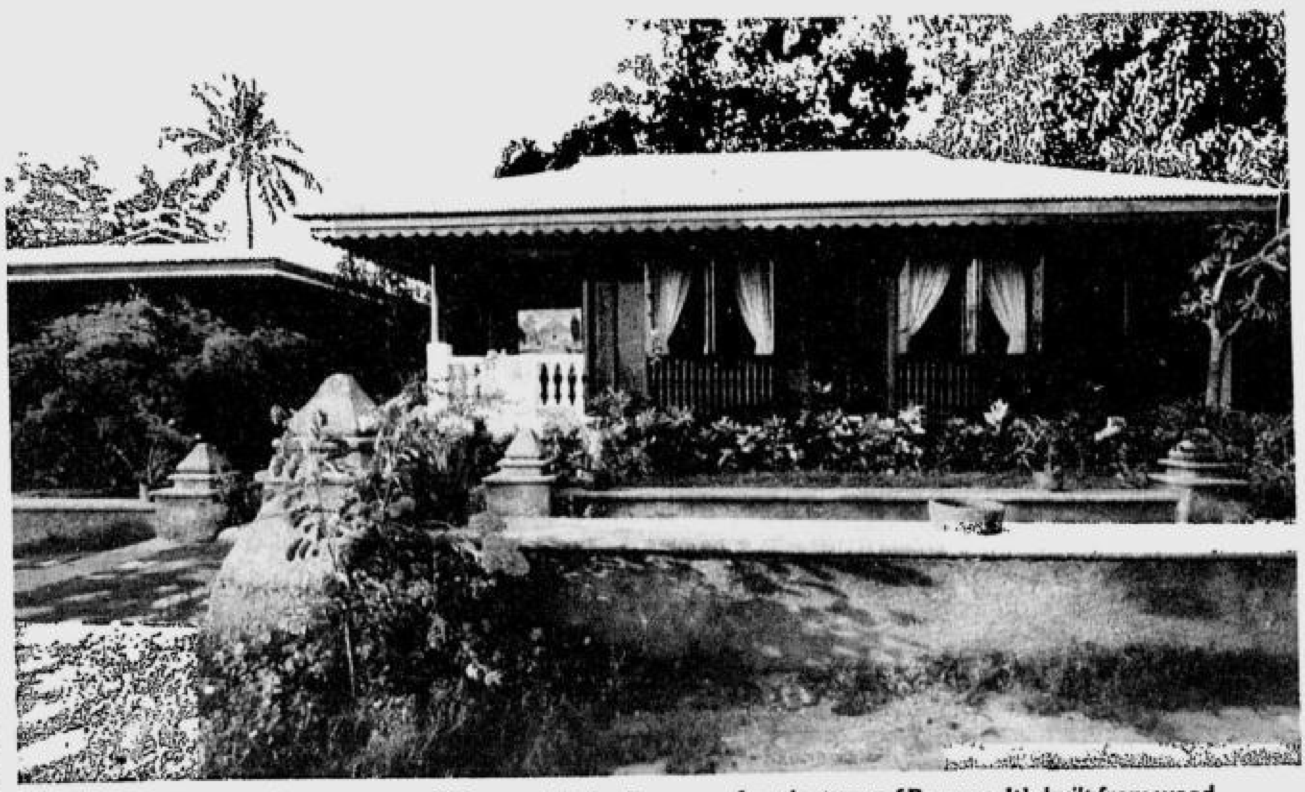
"Fibers of Life by Narda" is presented by the Fiber Industry Development Authority of the Department of Agriculture. It is directed by Palanca Award winner Steve Fernandez, who has engaged his Integrated Performing Arts Guild dance-theater ensemble as performers. Lighting will be by Joey Nombres.

The project, sponsored by Distilleria Limtuaco, Philippine Retirement Authority, Picture City, Coral Cove Resort and Lizmorasch Salon, will benefit typhoon victims in Albay.

Call the CCP Box Office at 8323704, 8321125 local 1409, or Narda's Makati, 8966945.



DR. Joven Cuanang on his beachfront



ONE of the Sitio homes is a one-story affair named Balay Bacarra, after the town of Bacarra. It's built from wood salvaged from a Bacarra house.

PHOTOS BY JOVEL LORENZO

'Heritage resort' rises in Ilocos

From page H1

The interiors are as stark and spare as its façade. The only color is in the stained-glass windows designed for the chapel by Antonio Leano. Its lone chandelier once adorned the Quiapo church. Anyone, even a man, would feel the romantic urge to tie the knot in this quaint, romantic setting.

A few weeks ago, Cecile Licad had an evening concert at Capilla de San Miguel, as the chapel is named. This Holy Week, it will be the venue of the traditional *pabasa* to be done by the old folk of Ilocos Norte.

Ilocos places

The homes were built from old wood, bricks and architecture details retrieved from torn-down structures around Ilocos. They were named after places in Ilocos, such as Bacarra, Dingras, Batac, Piddig. Their furnishings come from the '50s homes or even older. Their artworks are by today's foremost artists.

In the Batac home is a wedding portrait of Mariano and Remedios Cuanang—the doctor's parents—done in the "Larawan" style by National Artist Bencab.

In the dining area hangs a Manny Garibay mural of "El Vibora," depicting the bravery of Gen. Artemio Ricarte. In the living room on the second floor hang the portraits of Juan and Antonio Luna, both illustrious sons of the neighboring town of Badoc.

Called a "heritage resort," Sitio Remedios accepts stay-in guests and has its own kitchen serving Ilocano fare. You can feast on the homegrown greens and seaweeds and, of course, *bagnet*. From day to night, you're lulled by the sound of the waves, and cooled by the sea breeze.

Dr. Cuanang collaborated with fashion designer Lito Perez of Camp Suki fame to give the guests a memorable night. Guests have the option of driving to Vigan (it takes about an hour) to have a turn-of-the-century dinner, an impressive production mounted by Perez in the ancestral Arce home which he is leasing.

On our last night at the Sitio, driving back from dinner in Vigan, we were greeted by the sight of the entire *sitio* carpeted with lit candles, hundreds and hundreds of them. Against a moonlit sky, the vista was magical.

The Sitio has taken on yet another character. Irene Marcos Araneta, a recent guest, called it the "night of 400 candles," which, she told Dr. Cuanang, was the talk among her friends.

To Dr. Cuanang, the sprawl represents a return to his roots and his way of giving back. He pointed at the watch tower that was almost completed in one side of the beachfront—it will be a venue for Ilocos arts and crafts. You wonder what drives someone to recreate the past.

"Pride of place," he said. "It's for the future (generation)." That's a rare investment these days.

Sitio Remedios is fully booked for the Holy Week. For future reservations, log on to www.sitioremedios.com.

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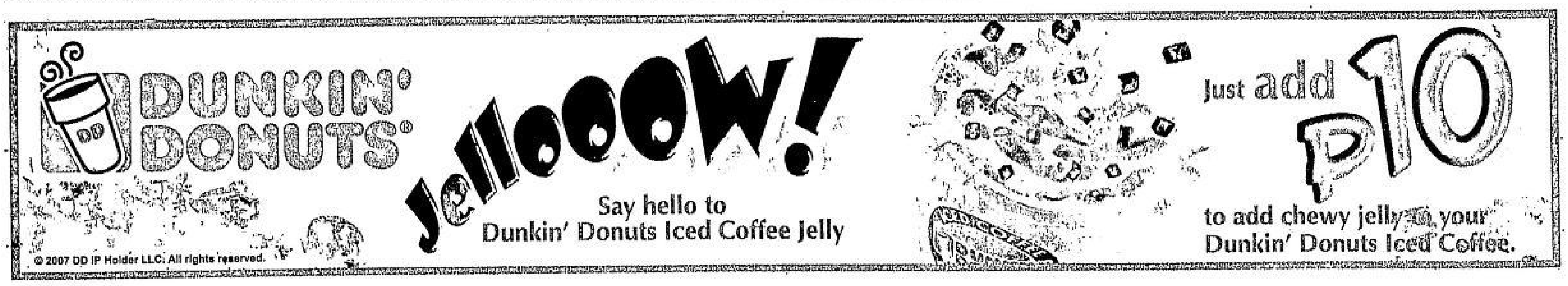

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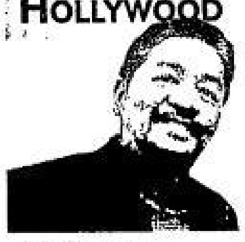
What Sacha Baron Cohen is like when he is not Borat



ONLY IN HOLLYWOOD

Ruben V. Nepales

LOS ANGELES—ME SUBBING FOR BORAT?

We were chatting with **Sacha Baron Cohen** at last week's premiere party of "The Lookout," his fiancée **Isla Fisher**'s movie, when a woman approached the actor and asked if she can have a photo with him.

Sacha politely told the fan he had already told her that he usually does not allow himself to be photographed out of character.

The comedian offered the fan if she would like to have her photo taken with us instead. Nice try, Sacha. We couldn't pass for Borat's sidekick, **Ken Davitian**, if we tried.

Sacha was dressed down in a cap, track suit jacket and sneakers. Across, photographers were busy taking pictures of Isla who wore another dress by Filipino-American designer **Monique Lhuillier.**

We wrote last week that when we interviewed the actress, she told us why she decided to wear a gown by Monique at the Oscars last February. This evening at the Egyptian Theatre on Hollywood Boulevard, the redhead was lovely in a black and white embellished tulle cocktail dress accented with a black taffeta sash from Monique's Resort 2007 collection. Okay, I did not pry that description from Sacha, who also metamorphoses into Bruno, a gay Austrian fashion reporter, in addition to Borat and Ali G. The dress details were courtesy of the Cebuana's publicist.

BORAT, left, as Sacha, right

"She is trying to steal the limelight from me," Sacha told me when I pointed at the media frenzy over Isla. He was joking, of course. This was the redhead's career moment so he deliberately dressed down and stayed away from the flashing cameras.

Isla's moment

He shared that Isla told him she enjoyed our interview with her. When we said she made us laugh several times in that press con, he declared in his British accent, "She's fah-neh (funny)." Sacha's voice is several notches deeper when he is not the Kazakh journalist. And he was genial and attentive. Amid the premiere party din, he was actually engaged in the conversation.

We couldn't get her to talk about you though, we complained to him in jest. "She is trained well," he shot back with a smile. As we wrote in our column on Isla, Sacha is not Borat at all when it comes to her. The man is so obviously in love with the "Wedding Crashers" star. He asked Isla a couple of times how she was doing amid the press hoopla.

The premiere of "The Lookout," a bank heist drama, attracted a diverse array of guests, from **Jodie Foster, Courteney Cox** and **Christine Lahti** to The Monkees' **Micky Dolenz. Joseph Gordon-Levitt,** who should break out with co-star **Matthew Goode** to stardom with the release of this film, surprised us with his appearance—quite a contrast to how he looked in our talk with him last week. Joseph, "Joe" to riends, had his hair shaved and his arm was on a sling. "I dislocated my shoulder," he said. He and **Ryan Gosling** are considered the next young actors to watch.

Another character

That night, we learned from Sacha that his next major movie, where he appears as Bruno, is not filming anytime soon. He will be paid a whopping $30 million in this movie but questions are being raised if Sacha as the flamboyant Bruno can still pull off another film based on folks not recognizing him.

Instead, Sacha is shooting the film adaptation

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5 PREMONITION
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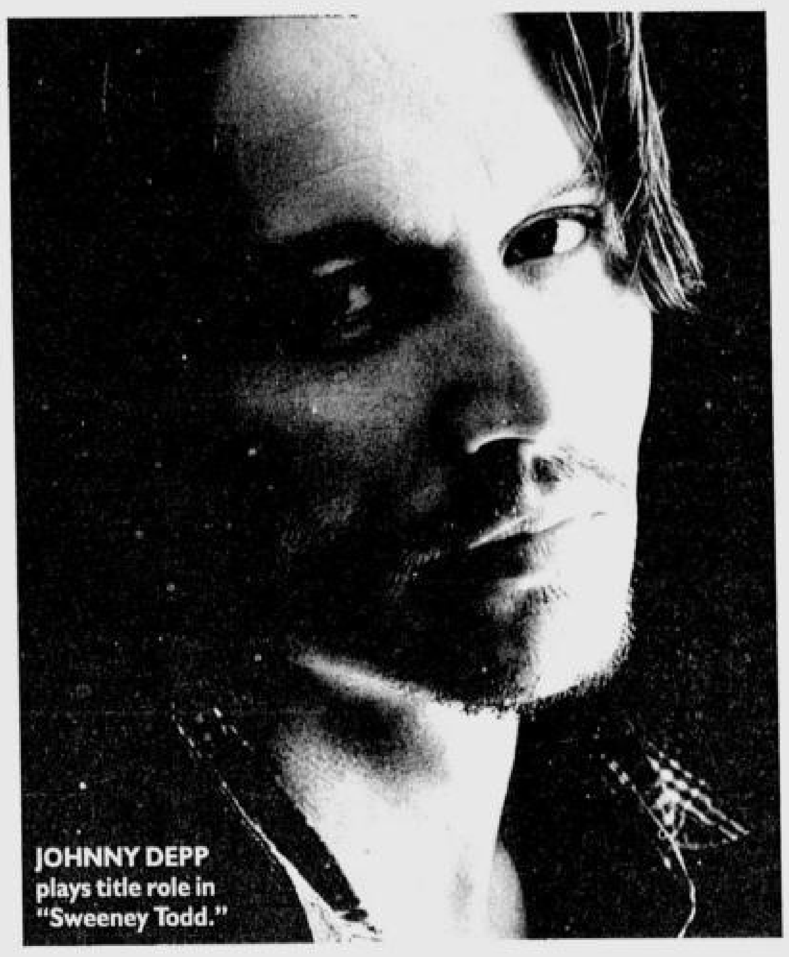
What Sacha Baron Cohen ...

From page 11

of the musical "Sweeney Todd" where he has "a small part." Sacha plays Signor Adolfo Pirelli, the rival of barber Sweeney Todd (**Johnny Depp**). Sacha and Johnny singing (using their real voices) as they shave and cut hair? We can't wait.

We read reports that Sacha may have upped Johnny in the barber skills department by hiring his real-life hairdresser, **Carmelo Guastella**, to teach him shaving techniques.

Carmelo was quoted in published stories as saying, "Johnny wasn't sure what I was doing on the set and Sacha told him I was his drama coach. In fact, Sacha is determined to put in a convincing portrayal of a barber. I gave him 16 hours of lessons, shaving with a cut-throat razor and he picked up that time what it took me 22 years to learn. He used his driver to test his shaving techniques on. At first the poor guy was rather apprehensive, but no blood was spilt."



JOHNNY DEPP plays title role in "Sweeney Todd."

Standing ovation

We did not get a chance to ask Sacha about the reports alleging that he was having a tough time singing **Stephen Sondheim**'s lyrics in the film and that director **Tim Burton**, hoping to solve the problem, allowed him to sing them in a rap style.

But Carmelo defended his client, stating that Sacha is performing the songs the way the comedian should. The barber, in another quote, said the recent Golden Globe Best Actor-Comedy winner earned a standing ovation from the cast when he practiced a song.

> Who is the better barber?

In the same story, Carmelo shared an anecdote which demonstrated Sacha's typical humor: "When Johnny told Sacha that he might be going to Los Angeles, Sacha told him that he had a lot of contacts in that city and he promised to ask them to do what they could to help him."

Incidentally, the filming of "Sweeney Todd" recently halted when Johnny's beloved daughter, **Lily-Rose**, 7, became seriously ill. News reports revealed that the girl's kidneys shut down after she suffered E. coli food poisoning.

Filming stopped

When Lily-Rose fell ill, Johnny and his partner, singer-actress **Vanessa Paradis**, dropped everything to be beside their daughter. The actor did not report to the set of "Sweeney Todd."

Now that Lily-Rose is out of danger, Johnny has gone back to the film's set in England. "Sweeney Todd" also stars **Helena Bonham Carter** and **Alan Rickman.**

In our previous interviews with Johnny, he talked fondly of parenthood, Lily-Rose and his son, **Jack John.** During a press con in Nassau, Bahamas in 2005, he said of his transformation into a father: "With the birth of my daughter (Lily-Rose), it was like another person's life had ceased and this new guy emerged who could see things clearly."

He added, "What I want is what all parents want for their kids—for them to be happy, healthy, and okay."

Culture mix

Johnny said of Lily-Rose during that interview: "We live part of the time in France and we live part of the time in Los Angeles so they do get that mix of cultures and that mix of language. Jack and Lily-Rose have already mastered French and English to a staggering degree. There are times when I'll say something in French and my daughter will go (nodding like an approving adult), that was very good, dad (laughter). She just graduated from kindergarten in Los Angeles. I was absolutely convinced because she's my daughter that she would share my feelings about institutions and authority but she loved school. I went to visit her class of 14, 15 little kids. She was teaching these little kids how to count to 20 in French. Talk about a weeper!"

E-mail the columnist at rvnepales_5585@yahoo.com.

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MTRCB Rating: G

METRO MANILA

SM MALL OF ASIA 556-0104
SAN MIGUEL · Coca-Cola
IMAX THEATRE
SUPERMAN RETURNS 3D
8:30PM
Admission Fee- P250
T-REX IN 3D
11:30AM 1:00PM 2:30PM 4:00PM 5:30PM 7:00PM
Admission Fee- P200
1 300
2 ROCKY BALBOA
3 PREMONITION
4 THE CHANTING
5 THE GROOMSMEN
6 HULING ARAW NG LINGGO
7 NORBIT
PREMIERE CINEMA
TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
CENTERSTAGE
HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
THE PODIUM
CINEMA 1
300
CINEMA 2
THE GROOMSMEN
633-8976

SM NORTH EDSA 929-5452
1 THE GROOMSMEN
2 HULING ARAW NG LINGGO
3 TURISTAS
4 300
5 PREMONITION
6 NORBIT
7 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
8 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
9 THE CHANTING
10 HAPPY HEARTS
11 ROCKY BALBOA
12 BECAUSE I SAID SO

SM MEGACINEMA 633-1901
1 THE GROOMSMEN
2 TURISTAS
3 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
4 300
5 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
6 PREMONITION
7 THE CHANTING
8 ROCKY BALBOA
9 HAPPY HEARTS
10 NORBIT
11 PATHFINDER
12 HULING ARAW NG LINGGO

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
2 PREMONITION
3 ZOMBIES
4 ROCKY BALBOA
5 TURISTAS
6 NORBIT
7 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
8 300
9 THE CHANTING
10 PATHFINDER
11 HAPPY HEARTS
12 HULING ARAW NG LINGGO

SM CITY STA. MESA 716-1416
1 300
2 NORBIT
3 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
4 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
5 ROCKY BALBOA
6 ZOMBIES
7 PREMONITION
8 HAPPY HEARTS
9 THE CHANTING
10 TURISTAS

SM CITY SAN LAZARO 786-2488
1 300
2 ROCKY BALBOA
3 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
4 THE CHANTING
5 NORBIT
6 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER

SM SOUTHMALL 806-6888
1 ROCKY BALBOA
2 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
3 300
4 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
5 THE GROOMSMEN
6 NORBIT
7 PREMONITION
8 THE CHANTING
9 HULING ARAW NG LINGGO

SM CITY BICUTAN 776-3055
1 PREMONITION
2 ROCKY BALBOA
3 THE CHANTING
4 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE

SM CITY MANILA 523-9240
1 ROCKY BALBOA
2 THE CHANTING
3 PREMONITION
4 PATHFINDER
5 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
6 300
7 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
8 NORBIT
9 HAPPY HEARTS
10 MONAY NI MR. SHOOLI
11 ZOMBIES
12 THE GROOMSMEN

SM CITY DASMARIÑAS (046)4323201-04
1 TURISTAS
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 THE HITCHER
4 NUMBER 23

SM VALENZUELA 293-3917
1 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
2 300
3 ROCKY BALBOA
4 ZOMBIES

SM CITY SUCAT 829-4975
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3 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
4 PREMONITION

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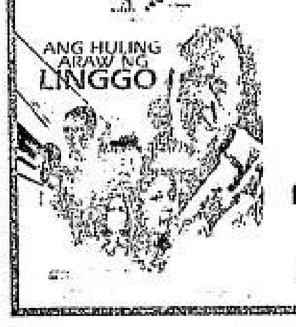
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1 PREMONITION
2 ROCKY BALBOA
3 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
4 THE CHANTING
5 300
6 HAPPY HEARTS
7 NORBIT
8 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER

SM CITY CLARK (045)625-5844-46
1 PATHFINDER
2 300
3 NUMBER 23
4 GOOD SHEPHERD
5 HAPPY HEARTS
6 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA

SM CITY MARILAO (044)9332013-17
1 300
2 MUSIC AND LYRICS
3 HAPPY HEARTS
4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA

SM CITY BATANGAS 885-6401-04
1 PATHFINDER
2 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
3 HAPPY HEARTS
4 THE HITCHER

SM CITY PAMPANGA (045)9637661-65
1 PATHFINDER
2 300
3 THE NATIVITY
4 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
5 THE GOOD SHEPHERD
6 HAPPY HEARTS

SM CIY LIPA (043) 756-7925
1 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
2 PATHFINDER
3 BECAUSE I SAID SO
4 THE GOOD SHEPHERD

SM CITY LUCENA (042)7108977-80
1 300
2 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
3 HAPPY HEARTS
4 EPIC MOVIE

SM CITY BAGUIO (074)6197838-39
1 EPIC MOVIE
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
3 NUMBER 23
4 DREAMGIRLS

SM SUPERCENTER MOLINO (046)474-3160
1 ROCKY BALBOA
2 HAPPY N'EVER AFTER
3 ZOMBIES
4 SIQUIJOR

SM CITY STA. ROSA (049)5340811
1 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
2 SIQUIJOR
3 THE GOOD SHEPHERD
4 ROCKY BALBOA

VISAYAS MINDANAO

SM CITY DAVAO (082)2076998
1 THE FOUNTAIN
2 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
3 SIQUIJOR
4 NUMBER 23
5 300
6 DREAMGIRLS

SM CITY CAGAYAN (088)859-2884
1 THE GOOD SHEPHERD
2 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
3 BECAUSE I SAID SO
4 300

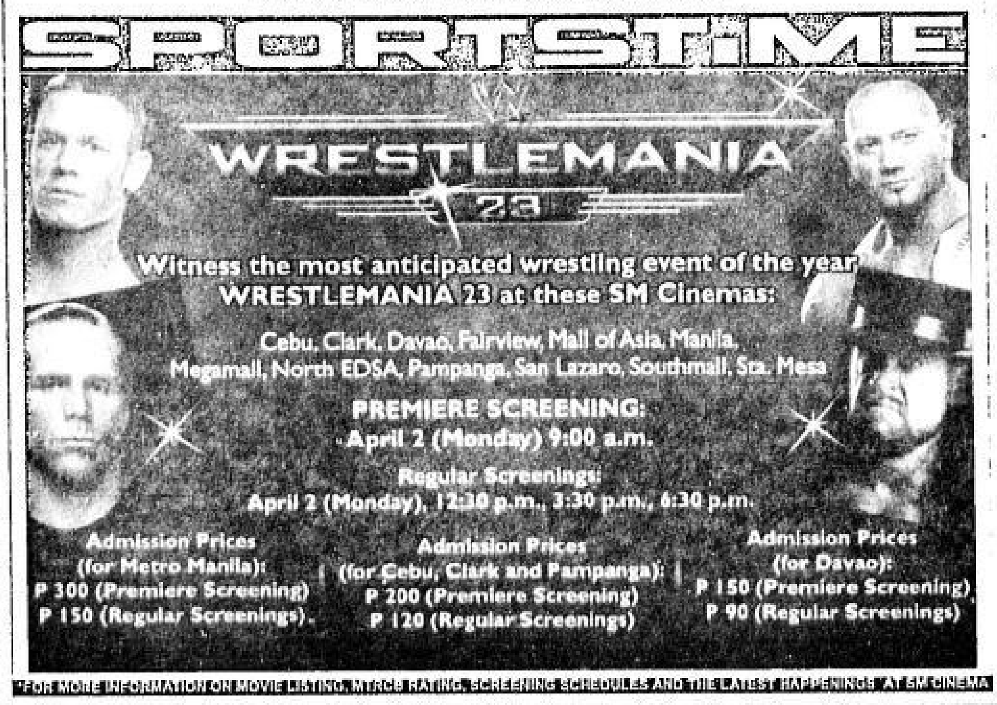
SM CITY ILOILO (033)3209422
1 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
2 300
3 SIQUIJOR
4 BECAUSE I SAID SO
5 EPIC MOVIE
6 DREAMGIRLS
7 RESERVED
8 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA

SM CITY CEBU (032)231-3876
1 GHOST RIDER
2 PATHFINDER
3 NUMBER 23
4 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
5 SIQUIJOR
6 TENACIOUS D
7 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA
8 300

SM CITY BACOLOD (034) 708 1010
1 EPIC MOVIE
2 300
3 THE GOOD SHEPHERD
4 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE

SPORTSTIME



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Cebu, Clark, Davao, Fairview, Mall of Asia, Manila, Megamall, North EDSA, Pampanga, San Lazaro, Southmall, Sta. Mesa

PREMIERE SCREENING:
April 2 (Monday) 9:00 a.m.

Regular Screenings:
April 2 (Monday), 12:30 p.m., 3:30 p.m., 6:30 p.m.

Admission Prices (for Metro Manila):	Admission Prices (for Cebu, Clark and Pampanga):	Admission Prices (for Davao):
P 300 (Premiere Screening)	P 200 (Premiere Screening)	P 150 (Premiere Screening)
P 150 (Regular Screenings).	P 120 (Regular Screenings)	P 90 (Regular Screenings)

*FOR MORE INFORMATION ON MOVIE LISTING, MTRCB RATING, SCREENING SCHEDULES AND THE LATEST HAPPENINGS AT SM CINEMA

POWER PLANT CINEMA

Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX

PREMONITION - - PG13 5:40,8:00,10:20 **NORBIT - PG13** 1:20,3:30	**DHAPPILY N'EVER AFTER - G** 12:20,2:20,4:20,6:20,8:20,10:20	**TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES - G** 12:30,2:30,4:30,6:30,8:30,10:30
300 - R13 12:30,3:00,5:30,8:00,10:30	**THE GROOMSMEN - R13** 1:45,3:55,6:05,8:15,10:25	**ROCKY BALBOA - PG13** 1:10,3:30,5:50,8:10,10:30

MOVIES AND SCREENING SCHEDULES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR VERIFICATION CALL 898-1440/41

JULIE ESTELLE
EVAN SANDERS
THE CHANTING

SHOWING at robinsons movieworld

Samantha (Julie Estelle) has had it enough living with her step-father who takes advantage of and molests her since her mother passed away. She decides to move to a boarding house. She ignores the fact that the location is in a haunted neighborhood. Her boyfriend Evan (Evan Sanders) tries to warn her, but since their relationship is hanging on a thread, Sam doesn't really listen to his warnings. Once arrived, the keeper of the house sings an ancient Javanese chant that somehow taps into Sam's nerve. The ancient chant is connected to an Indonesian she-demon, The Kuntilanak. A confrontation with one of the female tenants causes Sam to unvoluntarily chant the spell. As a result, the girl dies in a tragic death. The next thing she knows, whomever she sings the chant to will die a horrible death. Things turn out of control, and Evan tries to get Sam out of the house. Yet, the unstable Sam misunderstands Evan and ends up singing the chant to him. Evan then mysteriously disappears. Sam learns that there's a power bestowed to her, and she is eager to find Evan before that evil power takes total control of her.

Has yet to be rated by MTRCB

SHANG CINEPLEX

① TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE MTRCB: GP
12.20, 2.45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

② HAPPILY N'EVER AFTER MTRCB GP
1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00

③ ROCKY BALBOA MTRCB PG-13
12.10, 2:30, 5.00, 7:30, 10:00

④ PREMONITION MTRCB PG 13 2.30, 5.00
300 MTRCB R-13 7:10, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE — EXILED MTRCB: R-18
12.40, 3.00, 5.20, 7:40, 10:00

Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice

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Come and join the fun at the Shang's Easter Treasure Hunt April 8, from 1 to 5 pm at the grand Atrium, Level 2. There will be a bubble show, acrobatic show, air brush tattoo, loot bags, games and a whole lot more! Registration fee is P350 per participant. Registration is on a first-come-first served basis at the Administration Office, Level 5, Shangri-La Plaza.

6th floor, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
EDSA corner Shaw Blvd., Mandaluyong City
Call 633-7851, loc. 171/ 170 or 633-2227 for more details.

Shangri-La Plaza

MTRCB RATING ▸ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

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...the first movie Sandra Bullock has successfully carried in years."
---Roger Moore, Orlando Sentinel

"A **GRIPPING THRILLER** *that will have you guessing from start to finish.*"
---Pete Hammond, Maxim

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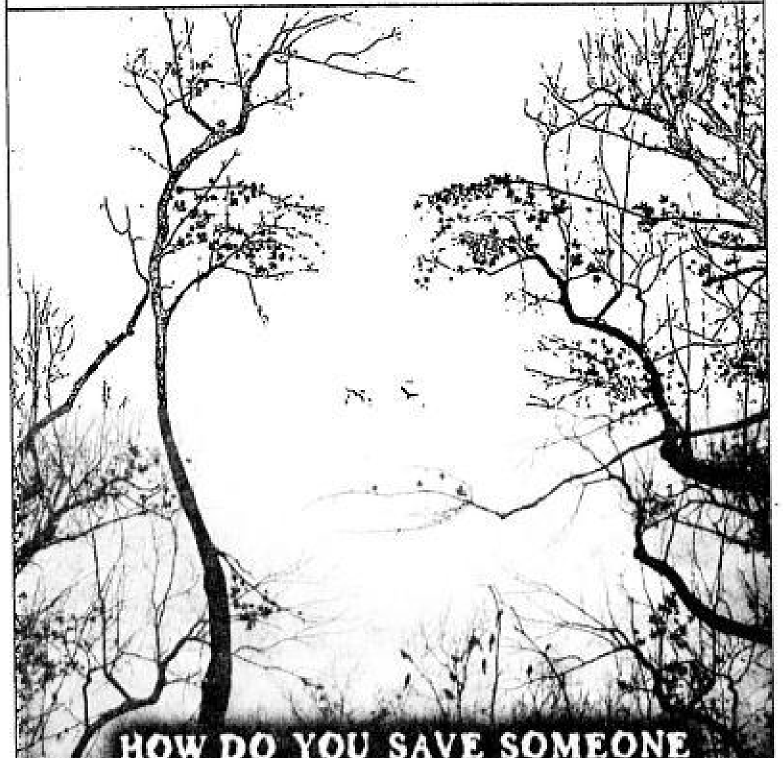

HOW DO YOU SAVE SOMEONE WHO IS ALREADY DEAD?

SANDRA BULLOCK
PREMONITION

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METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION

MOVIE GUIDE
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1 TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLE
2 (DOLBY) HAPPILY N'EVER AFTER
3 (DOLBY) ROCKY BALBOA
4 (DOLBY) PREMONITION / 300
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) EXILED

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, China Races Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 300
2 PREMONITION
3 NORBIT
4 TURISTAS

starmall EDSA-SHAW
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
3 PREMONITION
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) MONAY NI SHOLI
5 RESRVED

metropolis star cinema
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8604265, 5433994
1 MONAY NI SHOOLI
2 PATHFINDER
3 TURISTAS
4 300

THEATRES
1 300
2 HAPPY HEARTS
3 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

PACIFIC MALL LUCENA CINEMAGIC
Pacific Mall Lucena Tel (042) 660-5271
1 HAPPY HEARTS
2 EPIC MOVIE
3 RESRVED
4 RESRVED

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DTS) ZOMBIES
2 (SDDS) APHA DOG
3 (DTS) TURISTAS
4 GOLD (DTS) PATHFINDER
5 GOLD (DOLBY) PREMONITION
6 GOLD (SDDS) 300
7 GOLD (DOLBY) NORBIT
8 BECAUSE I SAID SO
9 MONAY NI SHOOLI
10 HAPPY HEARTS

Blue Wave MARIKINA
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sta. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) 300
2 (DOLBY) TURISTAS
3 (DOLBY) PREMONITION
"PACQUIAO VS' SOLIS" APRIL 15, 2007

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto tel 7334228
1 (DOLBY) PATHFINDER
2 TURISTAS
3 MONAY NI SHOLI
4 300
5 PREMONITION

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 MONAY NI SHOOLI
2 PATHFINDER
3 YOU GOT ME
4 ASK THE DUSK

Maragana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290 / 833.3274
1 MONAY NI SHOOLI
2 ZOMBIES
3 ALPHA DOG

Center Mall Cinema
Baguio Center Mall, Magsaysay Avenue (Baguio City) tel (074)- (4449346)
1 300
2 MUSIC & LYRICS

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY) NUMBER 23
2 MONAY NI SHOOLI
3 (DTS) IT'S A BOY GIRL THING
4 HAPPY HEARTS

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 HAPPY HEARTS
2 BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 457.6163 or 72
1 (DOLBY) PREMONITION
2 (DOLBY) 300
3 (DOLBY) NORBIT
4 (DOLBY) TURISTAS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 HAPPY HEARTS
2 (DTS) DEAD PEOPLE-2
3 (DOLBY) 300
4

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel. (049) 4111146
1 RESERVED
2 (DOLBY) RESERVED
3 (DTS) RESERVED
4 RESERVED

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS
2 HAPPY HEARTS
3 (DOLBY) THE HITCHER

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 HAPPY HEARTS
2 NUMBER 23
3 (DOLBY) GHOST RIDER
4 (DTS) PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 300
2 HAPPY HEARTS
3 (DOLBY) FLUSHED AWAY

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Gapan) tel. (044) 4867736
1 DEAD PEOPLE - 2
2 HAPPY HEARTS

Lianas Cinema
(Pasig) tel 640.4748
1 MONAY NI SHOOLI
2 PEEP SHOW

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) THE HITCHER
2 SHE WALK BY NIGHT
3 NAGBABAGANG LANGIT
4 (DTS) MONAY NI SHOLI

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) DEAD PEOPLE-2
2 HUNGER FOR LOVE
3 (DTS) MONAY NI SHOLI
4 FIRST TIME
5 SHAOLIN VS' EVIL DEAD

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 MONAY NI SHOOLI
2 DEAD PEOPLE-2
3 HAPPY HEARTS
4 EPIC MOVIE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 MONAY NI SHOLI
2 OBSESSION

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-Samuel Mentalbo

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-Joan Bolanio

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- Chiong Ruiz

PARA NA RIN AKONG NAKA-DISCOUNT!
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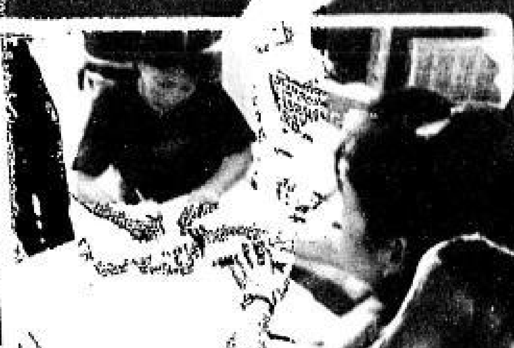


MURA LANG!
-Jessica Bargayo

CEBU IS JUST THE BEGINNING...
WATCH OUT FOR PREPAID SUPERLINE GIRL'S NEXT ADVENTURE!

Website: www.inquirer.net/entertainment

LIVING Stars

Editor Emmie G. Velarde

sms feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) and 283 (Smart) or email us at pr_entertainment@inquirer.com.ph

Lyn Ching: 'Get caught reading'

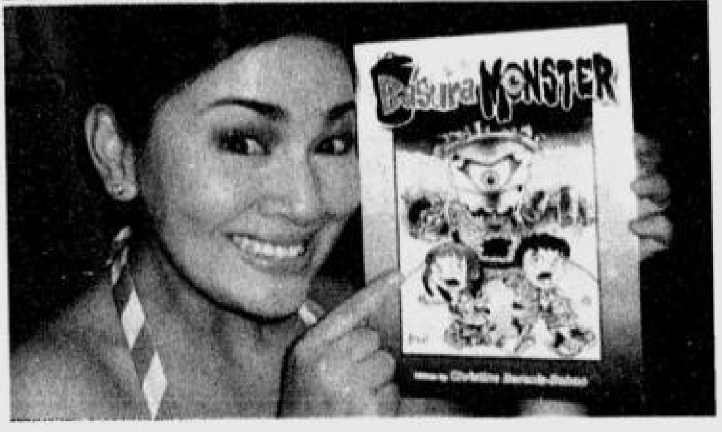
SAYS LYN CHING, CELEBRITY ENDORSER OF THE National Book Development Board's "Get Caught Reading" campaign: "When you read, you stretch your imagination, you learn something new. You are transported to a different world."

Like any true bookworm, Lyn has an extensive collection of books and prefers reading to any other activity.

"When I step into a bookstore, I immediately look for the biographies and bestsellers," relates the TV host, who says she fell in love with books at age 12.

The "romance" started with the Sweet Valley High series. Soon, she was reading Stephen King, Danielle Steel and Choose Your Own Adventure books.

Most recently, she says, she has been moved by Alexander L. Lacson's "12 Little Things Every Filipino Can Do To Help Our Country" and Charlson Ong's "Banyaga: A Song of War."



BOOKS

MICKEY FERRIOLS

I AM READING "BASURA MONSTER" TO MY son Brent. His godmother, Christine Bersola-Babao, wrote it. It's very educational, informative and value-laden, uncomplicated and direct-to-the-point. Plus, it's fun. That it allows me to tell the story in Filipino and English is a bonus. I am looking forward to more children's books from my *kumare*.

Bayani San Diego Jr.

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF TRAINSPOTTING AND 28 DAYS LATER

SUNSHINE

IF THE SUN DIES, SO DO WE.

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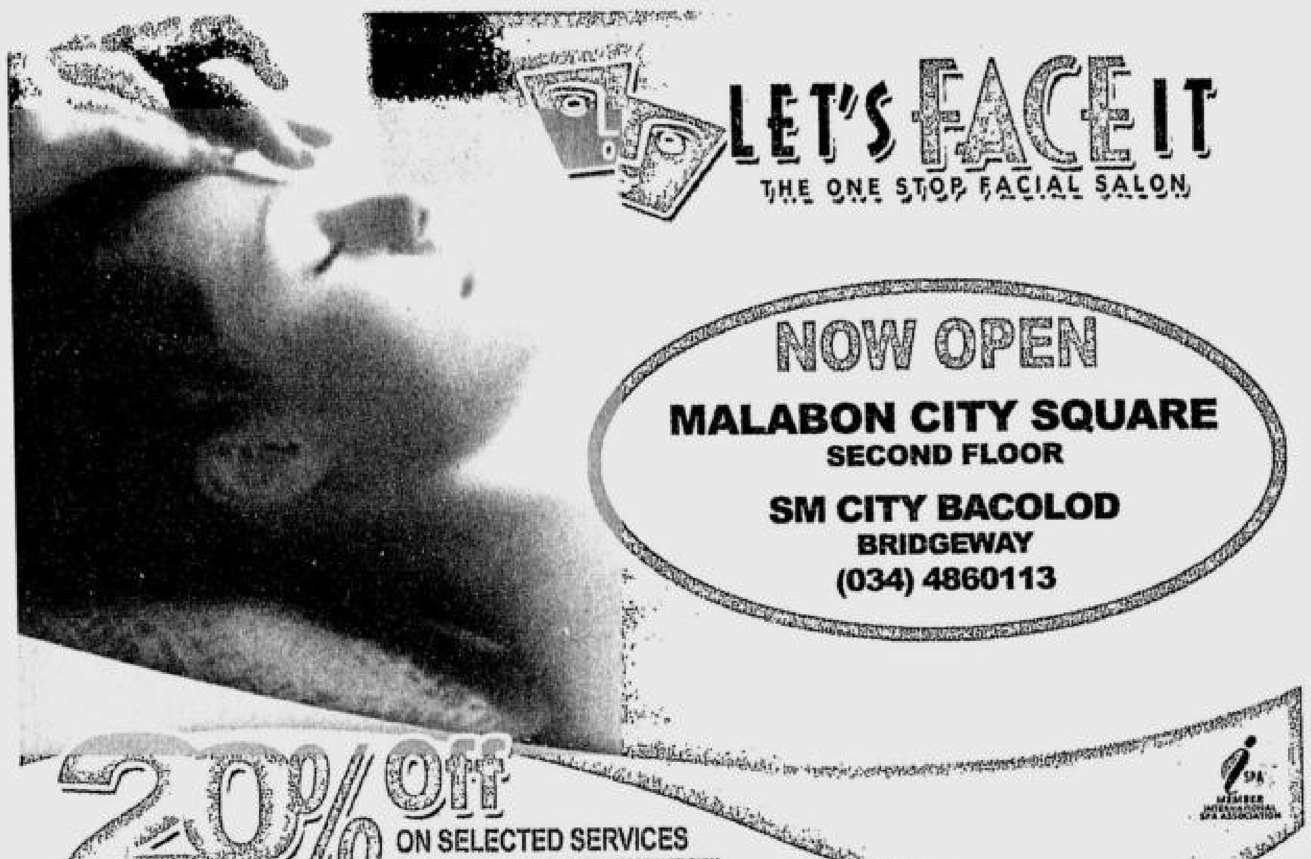

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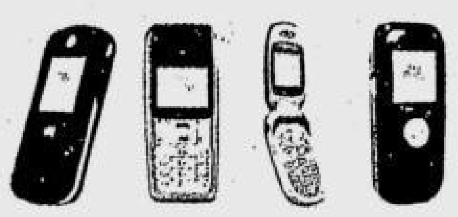

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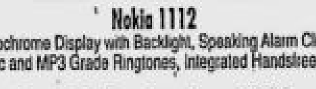

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BETTE MIDLER REUTERS

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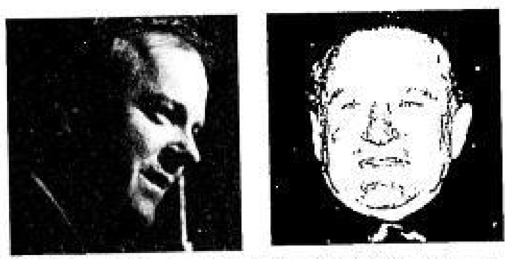
OZZY and Sharon Osbourne REUTERS

'Rocket Man' turns 60


KIEFER Sutherland and Robin Williams REUTERS

KID Rock and guest REUTERS

PORT OF SPAIN—POP SINGER ELTON JOHN should be banned from performing at a jazz festival in Tobago because his homosexuality could influence young people, some Christian leaders on the Caribbean island said this week.

A group of Christian churches have failed to persuade the Tobago House of Assembly, which oversees the administration of the island, to join the call for a boycott of John's appearance at the Plymouth Jazz Festival in late April.

But they said they would pursue the campaign against the singer, who married his partner David Furnish in Britain in 2005.

Sir Elton (he was knighted in 1998) celebrated his 60th birthday at Madison Square Garden in New York on Sunday, playing more than 30 songs from a career spanning four decades. Some of his famous guests are seen here.

In London on the eve of his birthday, he called for the world to stand up and speak out against homophobia.

He wrote in an article on human rights published in British weekly magazine the New Statesman that he was privileged to be able to have his relationship with Furnish recognized in law.

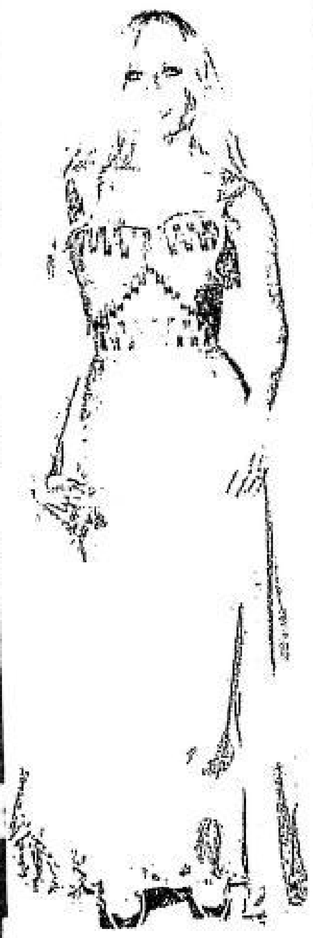
"I was legally bound to the man I love. It's my legal right and my human right. And I wanted everyone to know, I wanted to shout about it," he said.

Reuters, AFP

PARTY! PARTY!

ELTON John and David Furnish

PIERCE Brosnan and wife Keely Shaye


DONATELLA VERSACE REUTERS

JOHN Legend and guest REUTERS

LIV TYLER REUTERS

ARUN Nayar and Elizabeth Hurley REUTERS

RICHARD GERE

'M' FOR MADONNA, MILD WELCOME

Madonna has joined the parade of celebrities with their own fashion lines, but the material girl who used to shock audiences with her outrageous outfits kept to a mainstream tune. Madonna's much-anticipated clothing line, "M by Madonna," went on sale at the low-priced Swedish retailer Hennes & Mauritz AB's stores around the world last week. Excited shoppers in New York queued up 30 minutes before the H&M store on Manhattan's ritzy Fifth Avenue opened. Many shoppers were disappointed. "I expected the clothes to be a little more fashion-forward because she is such an icon and I heard it was based on her own closet," said Daniela Maron, a fashion publicist. REUTERS

Ninja Turtles unplugged, unmasked

MITCHELL Whitfield, Donatello REUTERS

LOS ANGELES—THE "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" put moves on the box office, with their new big-screen adventure "TMNT" debuting as the top weekend movie with $24.3 million. It ousted the Greco-Persian war epic "300" from its two-week reign over North American theatres.

Moviegoer-parents who were fans in the 1980s and 1990s brought their young ones in droves to see the martial-arts turtles battle back from dysfunction and lethargy to fight crime once again.

During the film's premiere earlier, the voice actors behind the mutants' masks delighted fans by posing before posters of their famous characters.

AP, AFP

MIKEY Kelley, Michelangelo REUTERS

NOLAN North, Raphael REUTERS

JAMES Arnold Taylor, Leonardo REUTERS

MARYO J. DE LOS REYES

MY TWO TOY TERRIERS Viggo and Mitzi are named after Hollywood stars Viggo Mortensen and Mitzi Gaynor. I had a dog named Marlon (Brando), too. He died already. My partner (scriptwriter) Jake (Tordesillas) has 10 dogs at home. I asked for Viggo and Mitzi before he could give them away. I buy dog food—five kilos of "sawdust," excess meat that accumulates in the grinder—at the supermarket every two weeks. We also spend a lot for their trips to the vet. Jake loves pets. He has quite a collection, which includes two turtles and a cat that we thought was ordinary, but which turned out to have come from Egypt!

Bayani San Diego Jr.
PHOTO BY RUDY ESPERAS

DISTRACTED
Keith Urban and wife Nicole Kidman attend the World Premiere of "Distracted," starring Rita Wilson, at the Mark Taper Forum in LA. AFP

'The TV Set' LA preem

SIGOURNEY WEAVER
REUTERS

DAVID DUCHOVNY
REUTERS

JUDY Greer (left) and Lindsay Sloane REUTERS

IOAN Gruffudd (right) and director Jake Kasdan REUTERS

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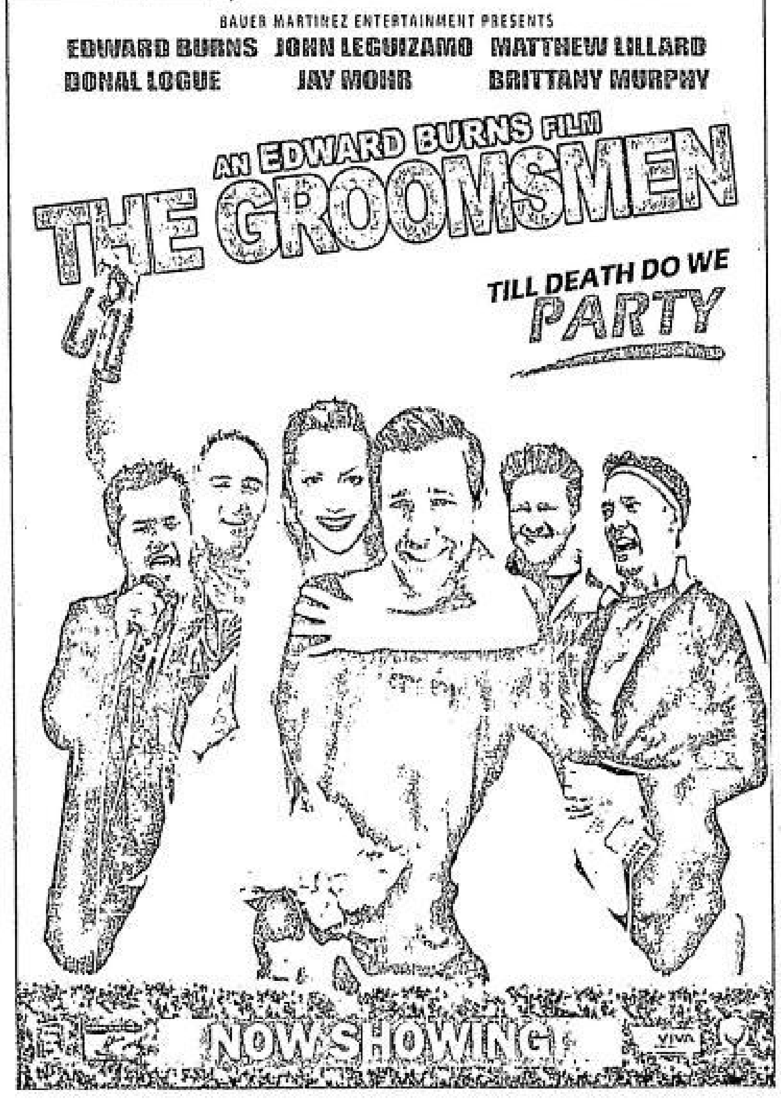
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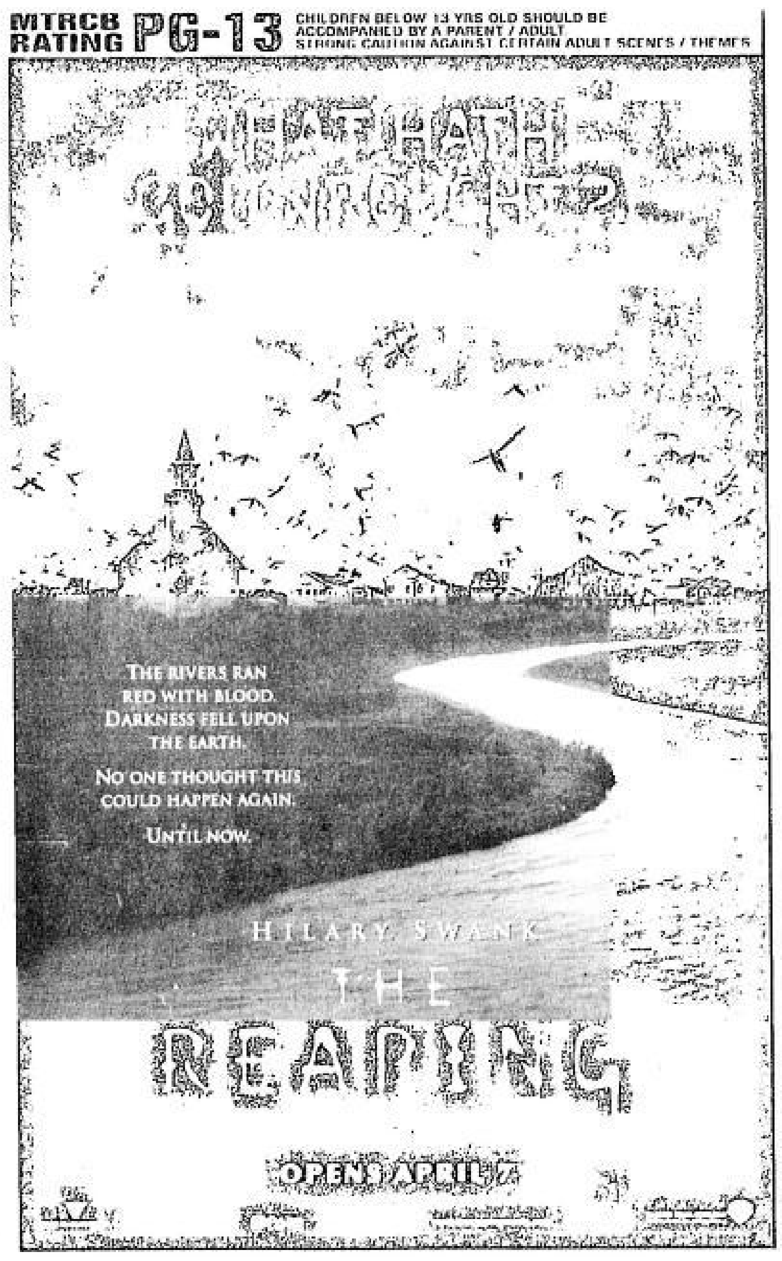
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THE RIVERS RAN RED WITH BLOOD. DARKNESS FELL UPON THE EARTH.
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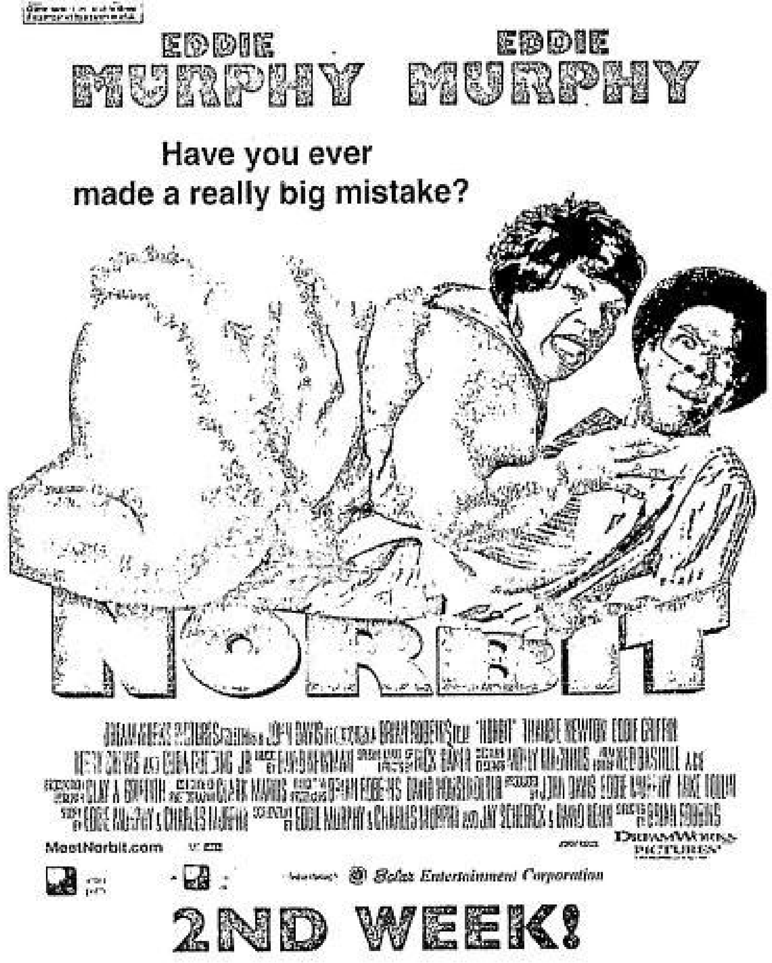
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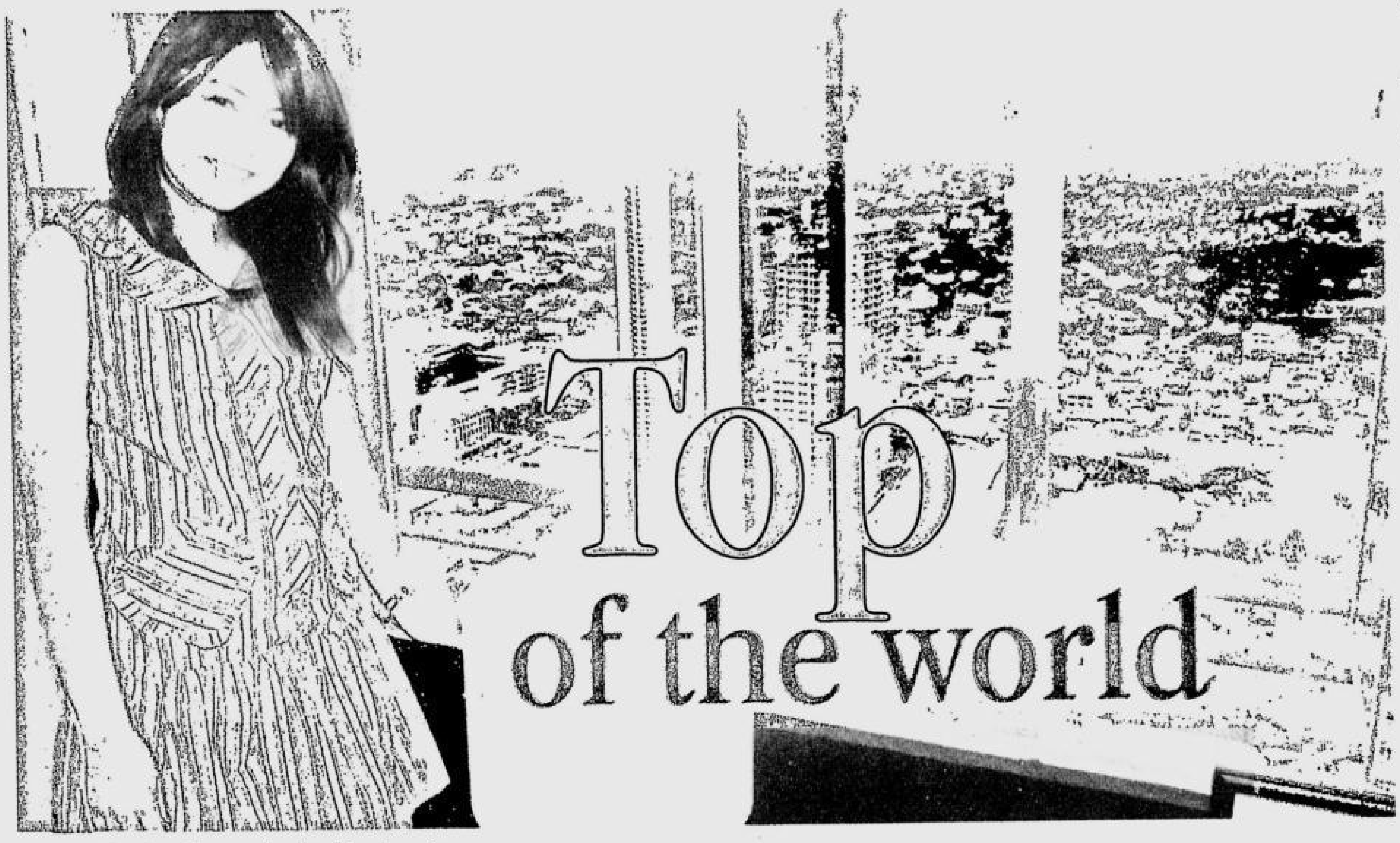
GOLD and Platinum record awards in the living room.

SPINNING star at rest, on a divan in the living room.

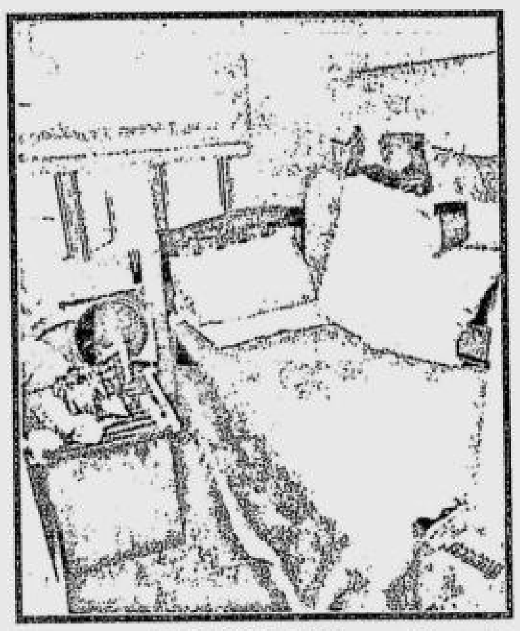
THE CONDO building has a swimming pool that the busy singer seldom gets to visit.

Top of the world

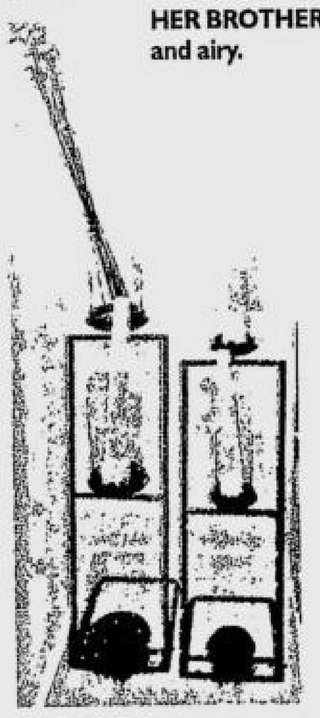
'Pinoy Dream Academy' turns singer-songwriter Yeng Constantino's life upside-down



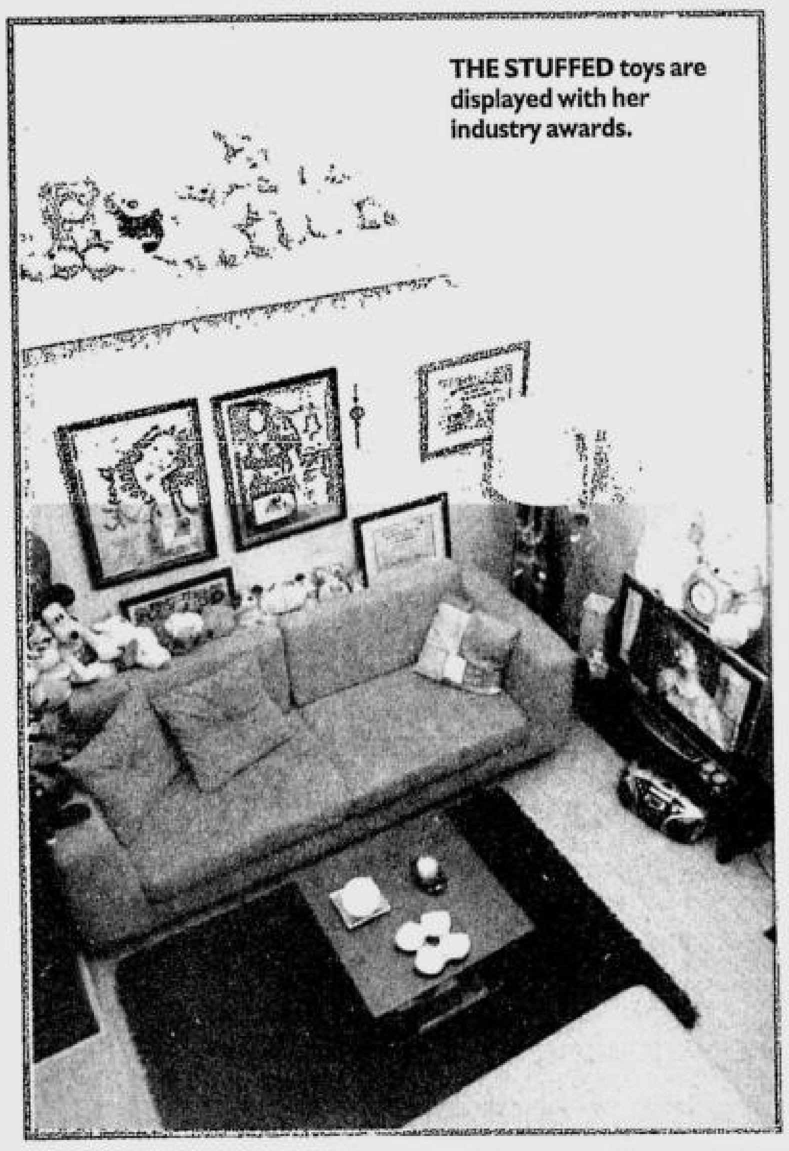
ROOM with a view: Cityscape inspires Yeng to write songs.



HER BROTHER's room is comfy and airy.



CANDLE holder at the stairs' landing.



THE STUFFED toys are displayed with her industry awards.

By Bayani San Diego Jr.
Photos by Rudy Esperas

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR makes.

For 18-year-old singer-songwriter Yeng Constantino, it was a dizzying 180-degree turn.

Before she auditioned for the ABS-CBN reality show "Pinoy Dream Academy," Yeng and her family had faced eviction from their home in Montalban (now Rodriguez), Rizal.

"We had lived there for six years. That was where I grew up," she recounts.

She was seriously concerned for her family's future. "My father's salary (as assistant librarian in Ateneo de Manila University) wasn't enough."

To help out, Yeng had quit school and joined the Morning Glory band. Her talent fee as lead vocalist was P250 a night. "If there was an acoustic gig, I earned a little more, P500. But even that wouldn't help us find a new house."

HOME BODY

Then PDA beckoned.

Wearing her "lucky" blue Converse Chuck Taylors, Yeng took a tricycle and then an FX taxi from Montalban to the ABS-CBN studios in Quezon City.

"I didn't really expect to get in the show," she admits. In fastforward motion, Yeng experienced a total reversal of fortune.

Part of her prize as PDA grand champ was this luxurious condo unit, courtesy of Globe Asiatique, and a silver Suzuki APV.

"It would have been a cute, two-door Swift. But my ABS-CBN bosses suggested that a van would be more practical," she says.

The three-room, loft-type flat, which was recently given a makeover on the ABS-CBN lifestyle show "At Home Ka Dito," also proved helpful in her work.

She explains: "I do most of my songwriting in the bedroom, where it's relaxing. It also offers a beautiful view of Mandaluyong and Makati—which is inspiring, especially at night."

Feels like she's on top of the world.

"For us Filipinos, owning a house is a sign that life has improved," she notes. "Now, we no longer worry about where our next meal is coming from. It's a great feeling to know that I can help my family. My brother, who had to quit for a while, is back in Nursing school."

The 44 sq. m. unit is home to Yeng, her parents and brother. The rest of the clan is still living in the old house, pending the scheduled demolition which seems to have been put on hold because of the elections, she candidly says.

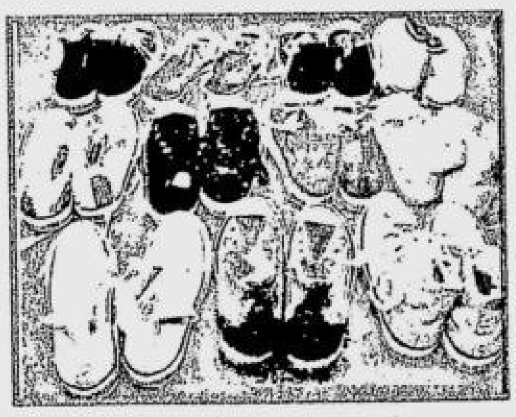
She dedicates her blessings to her parents.

"My PDA medal and Metro Manila Film Fest trophy (for "Hawak Kamay," Best Theme Song) are displayed in my parents' room. I would've put my Gold and Platinum Record awards (for "Salamat") in their room, too, if there were enough wall space," she says.

The Dreamer continues to dream: "My wish is for my family to someday move into a house and lot in the suburbs."

WITH her inspirations—brother Cooki and mom Susan

FAVORITE lion stuffed toy Sham-Sham goes anywhere with her.



YENG has 11 pairs of Converse Chuck Taylors—some bought in Marikina for only P200.

BOUGHT in Japan, this fur coat was a steal at the equivalent of P700.

THE CLOSET is crammed with clothes and costumes for gigs.

SINGING champ strums a guitar.

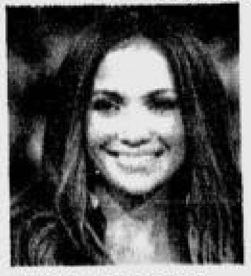
BEDROOM mural was done by a design-school artist for "At Home Ka Dito."

GOOFING at the second floor hallway

PORTRAITS rest on wooden steps that lead to her elevated bed.

RUSHES

Returning home and other journeys



JENNIFER LOPEZ

Jennifer Lopez

On recording "Como Ama Una Mujer," her first Spanish language album: "It's a natural return to my Latin roots. I've always sung in this language." *AFP*

HALLE BERRY

Halle Berry

Returning to Ohio for the screening of "Perfect Strangers," her new movie: "I'm so happy to be home. No matter how many countries I've been to, no matter how many warm receptions I've gotten, my heart was beating when I pulled up. Nothing feels better." *AP*

ANGELINA JOLIE

Angelina Jolie

About her newly adopted son Pax Thien: "He is very strong. You can imagine what courage it takes to be in all new surroundings with new people and a new language. It will take him a while to realize he has a family, and that his new life is permanent and that it won't keep changing. I will stay home to help him adjust. I have four children now; caring for them is the most important thing for me at the moment." *Reuters*

Jeff Woolf

Universal Rarities' auction director, on selling Anna Nicole Smith's two diaries for more than $500,000: "The gentleman who bought them required to be anonymous but I can tell you that he is from Germany and has the intention of making a book out of them and doing some things in the publishing world." *AFP*

Snoop Dog

On being denied a visa to enter the UK for a concert: "I sincerely hope the British government will reconsider." *AP*

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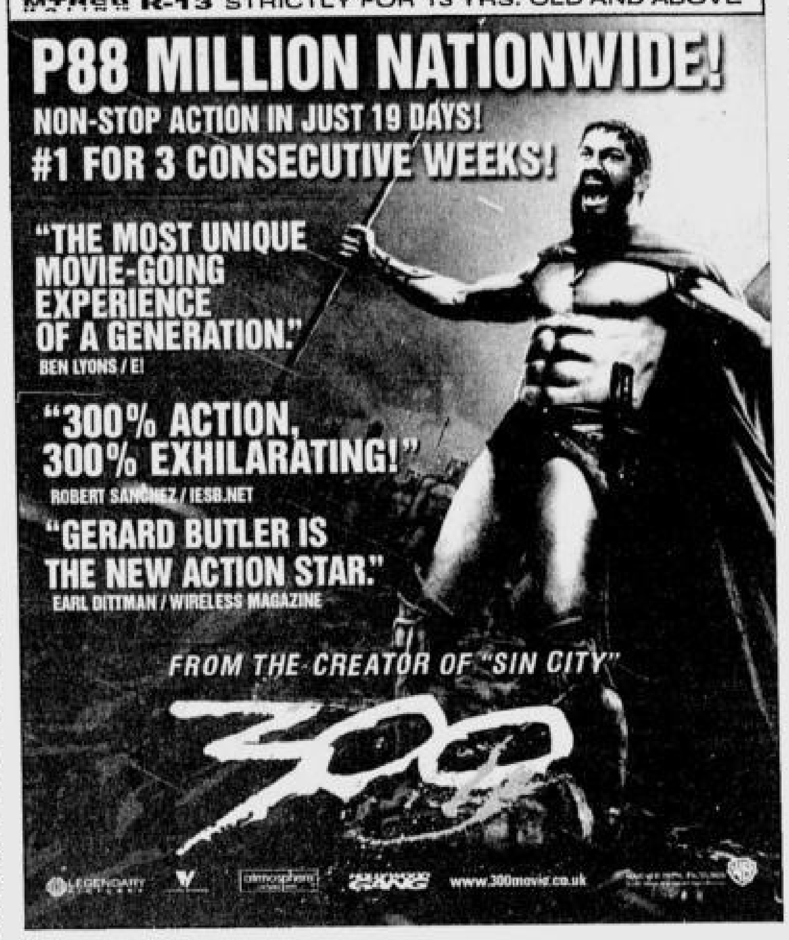

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3	300	12:15, 2:45, 5:35	R-13
3	TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES	8:20, 10:45	G
4	PREMONITION	1:05, 3:35, 6:05, 8:35, 11:00	PG-13

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	4	ROCKY BALBOA	
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M2 MARKET! MARKET!	1	ROCKY BALBOA	
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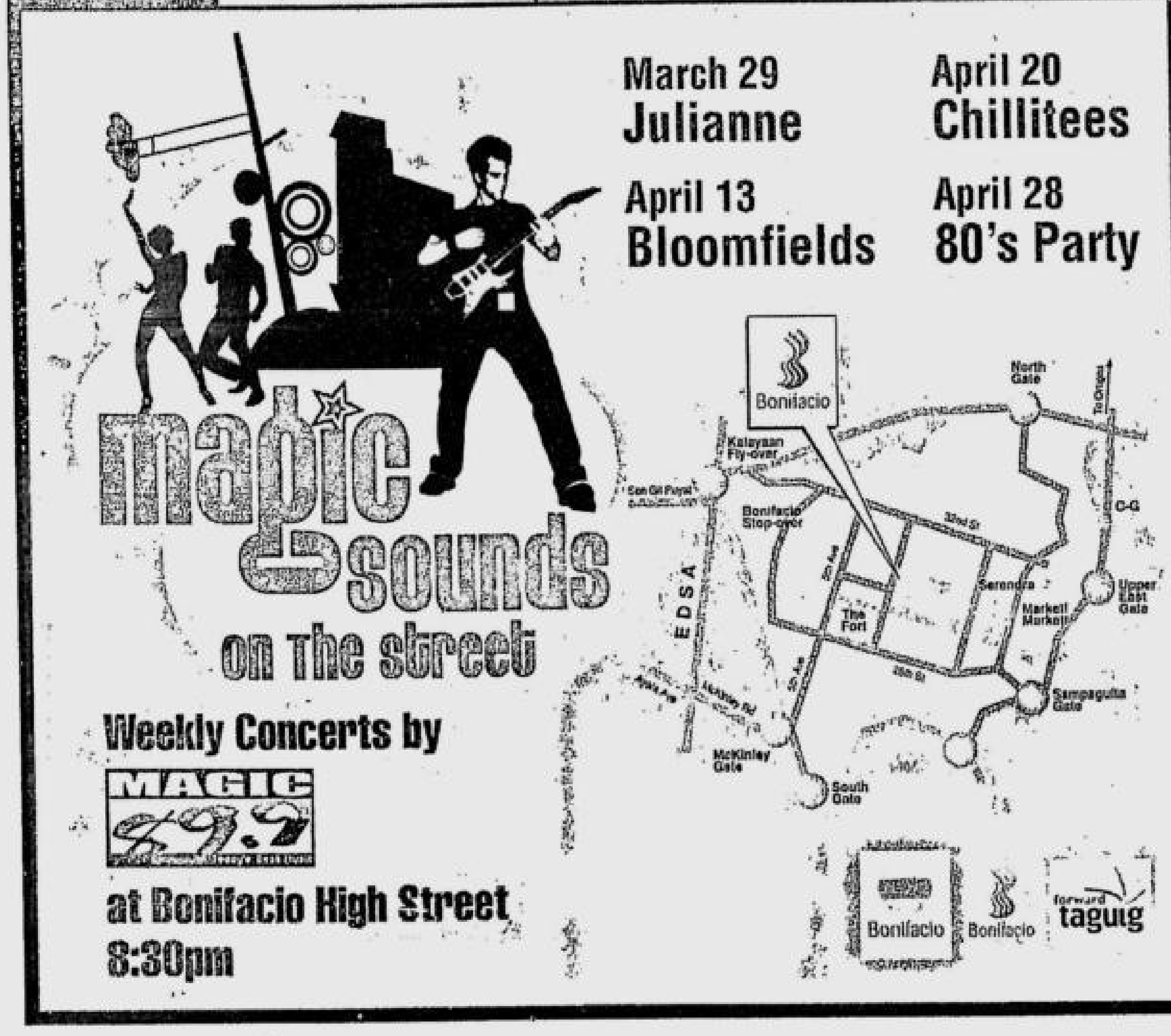

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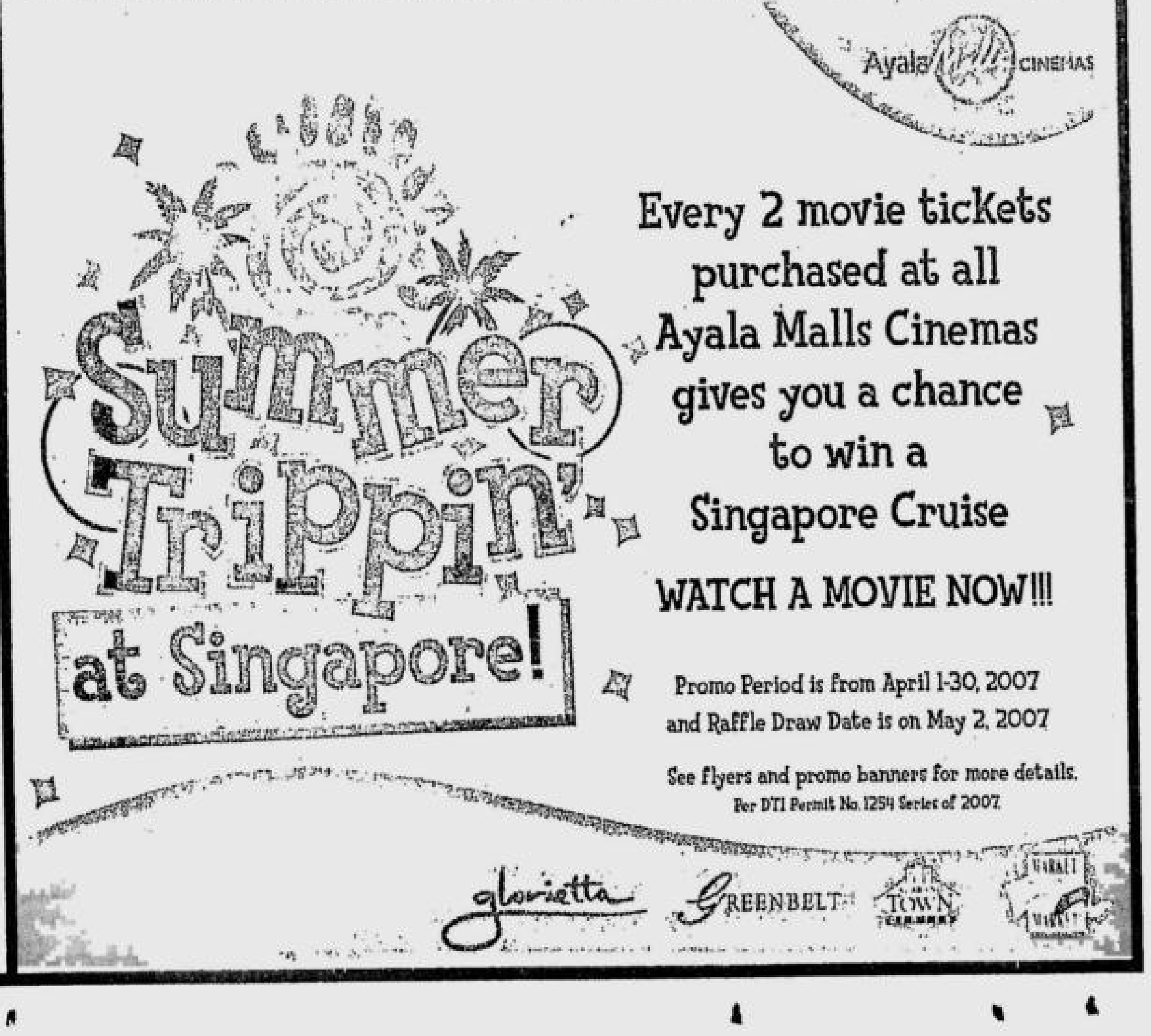

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ROADTALK

Summer shift

Editor Aries Espinosa · Page Design Alden Joshua Cedo

Vote one, take two

Subaru Outback provides an exhilarating middle ground for two opposing forces

By Tessa Salazar

IS IT A WAGON? IS IT AN SUV?

For politicians who can't seem to make their minds up on what platform (vehicular platform, that is) to enter into, here's a "third force" worth raising both your arms for.

Subaru has designed the sport-wagon/smart SUV Outback that touts to be both. The brand's world rally lineage, furthermore, provides a hint of what this docile-looking 5-passenger family hauler is capable of.

Available in the 2.5i and 3.0R variants, the Subaru Outback, much like its WR-proven sedan siblings, is blessed with the symmetrical all-wheel drive (for full time grip and cornering). But drivers beware: don't test that when your boss is waving at the crowd from up the sunroof.

Political candidates will find the Outback a humble servant, not a scene stealer like most SUVs that draw attention to the depth of campaign coffers they may or may not possess, which could actually work for the candidates' favor.

Drivers may find the controls a bit daunting, though. Why would a wagon's steering wheel offer paddle shifters? The dashboard is likewise "loaded". There's a lot of stuff there to keep yourself busy during traffic jams, or while the boss is dispensing one of those long-drawn out speeches

Aside from the paddle shifters, the driver has at his or her disposal the cruise controls, drive modes (which, incidentally, has separate controls near the steering wheel), audio settings, and buttons, buttons, and more buttons to indicate trip readings, ambient temperature, current fuel economy rating, and even an estimate of how far the car can run with the remaining fuel.

Probably the most interesting feature of the Outback is its drive mode options integrated in its 5-speed AT transmission, of which there are three settings. The "I" or Intelligent drive

VOTE/ K2

Chevrolet's tips for fuel-efficient driving

Some things in life are certain.

Like the fact that gas is not cheap.

Out of this reality comes another one: that motorists are now on the lookout for ways and means to cut down on fuel consumption.

And still another emerges, tied down to the first two facts. That General Motors Philippines (GMPh), distributor of Chevrolet vehicles in the country, has been at the forefront of developing and improving on engine technology to make vehicles that will get you more miles for less money.

In light of the prohibitive fuel costs that seem to be increasing every hour without even a warning in some cases, the Chevrolet Aveo Sedan and Chevrolet Spark answer the motorists' need for a transport system that is, besides being functional and practical, fuel-efficient. Aveo Sedan has a 1.4-liter engine and a high-performance European-tuned suspension and the Chevrolet Spark runs on a 1.0-liter, eight-valve inline-4 SOHC engine.

Aveo or Spark?

Both designed by the world-renowned Italian design house Italdesign Guigaro Design Studio, the Chevrolet Aveo and Chevrolet Spark appeal to sophisticated young men and women who have more than just a streak of adventure and passion in their personality, but who also appreci-

CHEVROLET/ K2

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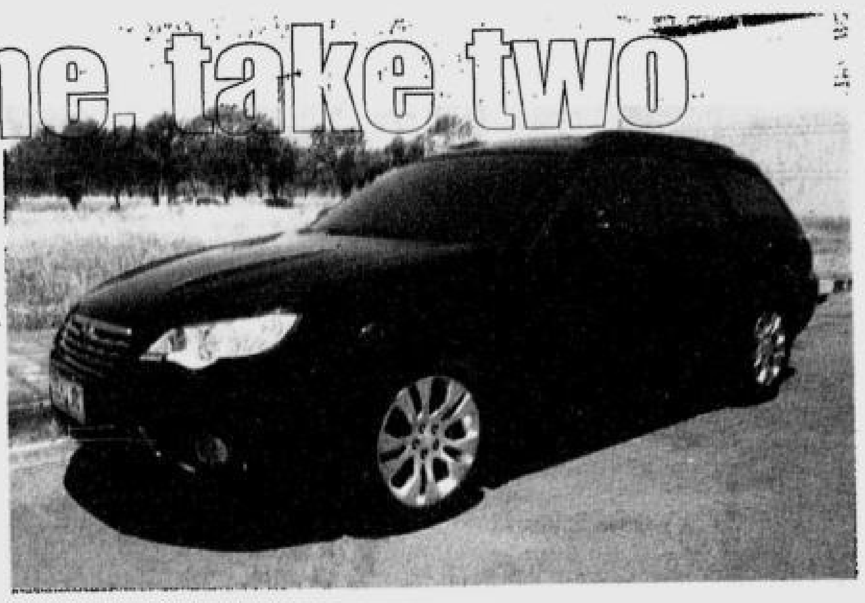
Vote one, take two

From page K1



programs the vehicle to run on optimized fuel efficiencies. This means you won't feel the sudden acceleration necessary for overtaking maneuvers in this mode. For that, you need to go to the "SP" or Sport Sharp drive. Here, amidst exhilarating handling, confidence-boosting stability and taut suspension, you will realize that the Outback deserves the Subaru logo and the Car of the Year trophy as well (in the luxury SUV category), faster than you can say, "Ladies, and gentlemen, honorable guests…"

For those who prefer to take it not too easy or too aggressive, there's the "SI" or Sport Intelligent Mode.

Everything else about the Outback is as expected for its luxury category: two zones for the air-con system (one set of controls for the driver and another for the front passenger); rear seats split 60/40 or fold flat; eight-way power adjustable front seats with the driver's seat equipped with memory features for precise seating positions.

The 200-mm high ground clearance is given added stability by having the heavier items sitting low in the chassis to give a lower center of gravity.

So, while the politician waves to the adoring crowds, the driver tinkers with the controls, there's still plenty of room for three more people inside to enjoy the spectacle. Majority wins.

The Subaru Outback, along with the Forester, Legacy, Impreza, Impreza Sports Wagon, Impreza WRX and the Impreza WRX STI, is exclusively imported and distributed by Motor Image Pilipinas Inc at 187 Edsa North Greenhills in San Juan. Log on to www.motorimage.net/PH/terms.php.

HIT MY RIDE

CONCEPT ONE
You Imagine We Create
H&R
XENON-BULBS

LOCAL TELEVISION will never be the same again as the country's top automotive custom car builders got together for the most innovative show ever to hit local television. Launched March 24 at the Greenhills Shopping Center, open parking lot between McDonald's and Missouri street, "Hit My Ride" is an offshoot of 99.5 Hit FM's popular Wednesday night 8 p.m. show "Hit Rides" which features the country's "Aftermarket Mafia", a group of young entrepreneurs engaged in the automotive aftermarket parts industry. The launch saw more than 300 people auditioning their cars for the chance to get their rides dressed up by the "Aftermarket Mafia".

Composed of the country's acknowledged king of bodykits Atoy Llave of A-Toy Bodykits; Sammy Liuson, distributors of Concept One wheels and Nitto tires; suspension specialist Arvin Lim of Bilstein and H&R Springs; and Benedict Go, the man who pioneered Xenon lighting for cars in the Philippines, together with Hit FM's GM Dicky "Big Man" Aracama, will act as judges of the TV reality inspired show. Hit FM DJ Sam YG will host the half hour show dubbed as the "Hit My Ride".

"It is a merry mix of popular TV reality shows, only this time, anybody who owns a car will audition in front of us and convince us why we have to dress up his/her ride. Of course, a thick hide, pure guts and character helps. Because this time around, contestants will be on TV and the personality of the car owner is now also part of the winning criteria," explains Liuson. The "Hit My Ride" winner will receive P500,000 worth of car accessories and gift checks.

New Hyundai models debut at Manila Int'l Autoshow

Amidst the astounding set-up of every exhibitor all contending for spectators' attention in a capacious, seemingly high-end industrial-type of setting at the celebrated Manila International Autoshow held at the World Trade Center, Hyundai Asia Resources Inc (Hari), the exclusive distributor of world-class Hyundai vehicles in the country, has drawn eyes with a stand-out performance as it launched three new exceptional models-the Hyundai Elantra, the Hyundai Coupe, and the Hyundai Veracruz.

With the high ceiling, towering trusses, and spacious parameters akin to an upscale but rather hectic depot prevalent in an urban industrial milieu, this setting perfectly rides with the theme of Hari's launch, "Urban Standout", signifying how Hyundai's three new models, the Elantra, Coupe, and Veracruz, stand out in their respective class amidst the tedious urban landscape proliferated with various cars and models with seemingly similar features.

Each car was unveiled and showcased with a performance routine that characterizes each car's personality—Street tap ballet dance for the Elantra's potent grace, Wushu exhibition for the Tiburon's impressive power, and Capoeira for the Veracruz's intimidating stance.

Ma. Fe Perez-Agudo, EVP and COO of Hari, is confident that these new models will further advance Hyundai's thriving position in the market. With the launching of these new models, Hari also reaffirms its commitment of bringing quality innovations as manifested in its efforts in overcoming the challenges that the local automotive industry encounters. "As a fulfillment of Hyundai's relentless efforts in bringing meaningful innovations to a broader community and eventually touching more lives in a wider spectrum, Hari once again gears up for more innovations designed to let you drive your way to a future made brighter with infinite possibilities", Agudo expressed in her speech.

Striking élan

With an élan intensified by a blend of confidence and power comes the 2007 Hyundai Elantra. Revamped from headlight to taillight, the Elantra is the seventh all-new model from Hyundai Motor Co (HMC) in just 24 months, giving Hyundai the freshest lineup in the industry. The more sophisticated and upscale exterior styling is matched with new levels of detail and craftsmanship found throughout the interior as it brings more refinement, safety and interior space to compact car shoppers. Inner strength lurks behind its graceful stance with its 1.6-liter CRDi engine rated at an estimated 115 hp at 4,000 rpm and 26 kg.-m of torque at 1,900~2,750 rpm.

Set on-track

Enthusiasts on a budget no longer have to sacrifice their desire for track-inspired styling and handling in a sports coupe now that Hyundai has factory tweaked the components and design of the 2007 Hyundai Coupe. The high-performance Coupe becomes an even more exciting and willing partner for enthusiastic driving with significantly firmer European-tuned suspension features, and superb structural rigidity that sets the foundation for precisely tuned handling performance. Its V6 powered-engine starts well with just a four-cylinder price!

Bearing 'true cross'

Derived from the Latin word *verus*, which means true, and the Spanish word *cruz* which means cross, Hyundai comes up with a genuine crossover utility vehicle that gives true justice to the powerful performance of a premiere SUV and to the lavish luxuries of an executive sedan—the Hyundai Veracruz.

The Hyundai Veracruz comes in three distinct trim levels. The GLS variant comes well-equipped with a 3.0-liter E-VGT CRDi V6 engine, six-speed automatic transmission, ESP integrated with ABS and TCS, rear spoiler, 18-inch alloy wheels and seating for seven. Also standard is the premium 8-speaker Infinity sound system with external amplifier including an 8-inch subwoofer, dual zone full auto air conditioning with AQS (Air Quality System), steering wheel audio controls, heated power side mirrors with puddle lights and side turn signal repeaters, front solar glass and rear privacy glass, remote smart key, and power windows and door locks.

Chevrolet's tips for fuel-efficient driving

From page K1

rate value for their money.

The Chevrolet Spark gives you exactly what you look for in an economy car that will allow a smile when you look at your remaining bank balance.

For those starting on a job or looking for a second car, either the Chevrolet Aveo or the Chevrolet Spark will be a most practical choice. Both will more than adequately fill their need for mobility with fewer trips to the gas pumps.

GMPh is happier still to dispense 9 tips on driving so motorists can further maximize their vehicles' fuel efficiency.

Drive on the right gear. Driving on a gear lower than you need wastes fuel. Letting the engine labor on top gear on hills and corners is also wasteful. In a manual vehicle, change up gears as soon as the car is comfortable with the higher gear but without accelerating harder than necessary. Automatic transmissions will shift up more quickly and smoothly if you release back slightly on the accelerator once the car gathers momentum. Avoid the use of power options which drops the car into a lower gear and therefore uses more fuel.

Drive smoothly. Stop/start driving is much less efficient and more polluting than driving at a constant speed. Avoid traveling during peak hours and on congested roads whenever possible. Take it easy on the accelerator - more revs equals more fuel use. Drive at a good distance from the car in front so you can anticipate and travel with the flow of traffic. This avoids unnecessary acceleration and frequent repetitive braking that ends up in more fuel wastage. It is also far safer. If you see traffic stoppages ahead, first take your foot off the accelerator and cut on the engine's power to slow the vehicle. Don't continue to drive at the same speed and then apply the brakes at the last minute. Getting back to cruising speed while the car is still moving uses far less fuel than stopping and then starting again.

(The smallness of the Chverolet Aveo Sedan and Chevrolet Spark gives you an edge when caught in heavy traffic on congested roads. Its superior design also allows easy maneuvers and smooth shifts from using the accelerator or the brakes.)

Minimize fuel wastage in idling. Most cars don't need to be warmed up by idling before setting off. This simply wastes fuel. Start the car only when you are ready to go. Once on the road, minimize fuel consumption by switching off the engine whenever the car is stopped or held up for an extended period of time. Idling wastes fuel. By having the engine switched off, even for a short period, you will save more fuel than will be lost from the burst of gas involved in restarting the engine. The net increase in wear and tear from this practice is negligible.

(Both the Chevrolet Aveo Sedan and the Chverolet Spark don't have to be warmed up before setting off.)

Avoid speeding. Fuel consumption increases significantly at over 90 kph. At 110kph your car uses up to 25 percent more fuel than it would when cruising at 90kph. If your car is fitted with cruise control, using it during highway driving will help maintain a steadier speed that will save you fuel.

Minimize aerodynamic drag. Additional parts on the exterior of a vehicle such as roof racks and spoilers or having the windows open increases air resistance and fuel consumption in some cases by over 20 percent at higher speeds. Take off the roof and bike racks when not in use. If you have to use roof racks, load them carefully to help minimize wind resistance or use a streamlined roof box.

Look after your vehicle's tires. Inflate your vehicle's tires to the recommended tire pressure and make sure your wheels are properly aligned. Looking after your tires will not only reduce your fuel consumption, it will also extend the tire's life - and probably your life, too, as bad tires often cause accidents -- as well as improve the car's handling.

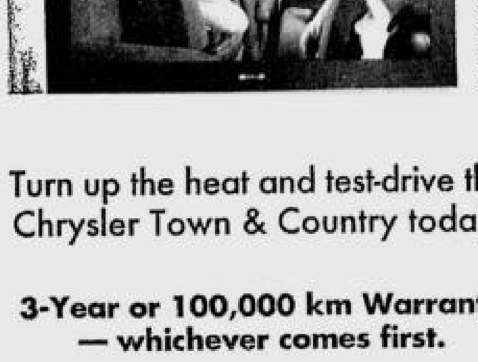
Use air-conditioning sparingly. Air-conditioners can use about 10 percent extra fuel when in use. However, at speeds of over 80 kph, use of air-conditioning is better for fuel consumption than having open windows which creates aerodynamic drag. If it is hotter inside your car than outside when starting on a trip, drive with the windows down for a few minutes to help cool the car before switching on the air-con.

Travel light. The more weight a vehicle carries the more fuel it uses. Don't use your car as a mobile storeroom. Leave heavy items like tools and sports equipment at home when you don't need them on a trip.

Keep you vehicle in good condition. Keep your vehicle well tuned-up and regularly maintained. Get your car service at the intervals specified in the manufacturer's handbook. Use the type of fuel recommended for your vehicle by the manufacturer. If you use regular unleaded gas in a car designed to run on premium unleaded gas, expect it to perform slightly less and consume fractionally more fuel. In some newer vehicles designed for regular unleaded, however, using premium unleaded may result in better fuel consumption but it is unlikely to offset the extra cost of the gas.

The Chevrolet Aveo Sedan and Chevrolet Spark offer a far more interesting option for young, discerning and sophisticated professionals looking for a fuel-efficient vehicle.

Who needs power behemoths when small is beautiful-and gas-saving as well.



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Choose safety

Kill Switch Raymond B. Tribding

ACCORDING TO COMMON PERCEPTION, the image of the typical Filipino motorcyclist is a thrill-seeking, car-dodging rider with no helmet and no side mirrors on his underbone. (An underbone is defined as a motorcycle with a single down-tube frame usually with a single cylinder, small displacement engine of about 100 to 150cc). Sadly after a cursory survey from my car window as I drive along the innards of the metropolis, the image seems to match reality.

The representative motorcycle rider these days is about 18 to 25 years old, typically a call center or shopping mall employee. But that doesn't mean a student, office professional, advertising agency graphics artist or director is excluded. His scooter or underbone bike is usually his first. Then he slowly graduates to a big bike of 400cc or more.

Sadly the lowly perception of most people (whether pedestrians or motorists) about the common motorcyclist is greatly affected by the time-beater delivery riders (calling Jollibee, Pizza Hut, Kentucky, LBC and JRS) or more commonly from the *pasaways* (deviants) as they are called in the forums of Motorcycle Philippines (www.motorcyclephilippines.com).

These *pasaways*, with their loud mufflers and neon lights ride around the traffic of the metropolis like they were playing a combination of roller skating and dodge ball. Many a *pasaway* are first time riders or those with "something to prove."

Unknown to many, these *pasaways* represent a very small minority of the riding community but do the most damage to its reputation. (Just like the family black sheep brings most shame to the family name.) In my same cursory survey, I could easily count how many riders do use the road with courtesy and pay attention to safety versus these bike-riding black sheep.

Safety starts in the head…literally

A lot can be said about riders who neglect even the most basic safety equipment needed when riding. Even more disturbing are some bikers antics, carrying more than one passenger, riding with no helmet, sometimes with no shirt.

The helmet, it need not be said, is probably the single most important piece of wearable safety equipment. And why not? In a frontal accident, the head is—2 out of 5 times—most likely to hit the pavement and sustain the most injury. A broken wrist is No. 2.

A reputable helmet is a must. Brands may not matter but choose one with at least a reasonably new SNELL or DOT rating. Absolutely do not compromise with your helmet. I see a lot of bikers with full-blown customized bike and wearing a plastic baseball cap as a helmet. Shame.

Not just air and oil filters

Most motorists do not understand the basics of riding, and fewer appreciate the fundamentals of safe riding, which includes a technique called "filtering."

Filtering balances out the size and position of the motorcycle versus bigger vehicles like cars and trucks. In the same way as car drivers pass a slower moving truck—because they can, motorcycle riders pass cars by "moving in and out of traffic-but this is usually translated visually as swerving,

It is sad that even riders who "filter" through the streets are seen as reckless and imprudent,. when the truth is, filtering around traffic, when properly done is far safer than keeping to one's lane, especially in the doubly intrusive conditions of Manila traffic.

Motorists should understand that the motorcycle, given its size and nimbleness, makes for pliable transportation around the tightest of traffic. "Cagers" (as motorcyclists adorably call drivers) can only watch in envy as the bike zips in and out of openings. In one of the forums I read, one motorcyclist said that "cagers hate riders because they can't do what we can do…(that is move in and out of traffic at will). That could be a valid opinion.

I am restarting a motorcycle column that began nearly a decade ago in Automotion magazine, in the newspaper I served in for five years.

Minus Two began as an offer from now Top Gear Columnist Erle Sebastian to begin a column that focused on an emerging force in the motoring industry then—the venerable motorcycle. I decided not to keep Minus Two but instead use Kill Switch—that wonderful little button usually found near the throttle that keeps things "in control."

Why "Kill Switch?" For starters I'd like this column to be one of advocacy—for riders rights, riders safety and riders concerns. The cliché is "for riders, from a rider."

Apart from that the only other reason I chose it is because the other selections I made were quite tedious: Engine Block, Throttle Cable, Front Disc Brakes and Muffler End were just too heady for my purposes. Besides there is such a wonderful zing to "kill switch," it sounds aggressive without being aggressive.

Having been an avid biker and weekend dirt rider, I had been raring to write about the hobby that dominated almost half of my life. At the time I was madly in love with bikes the total motorcycle industry volume was pitifully tiny.

Four motorcycle makers per year produced some 36,000 motorcycles yearly. Honda, Kawasaki, Yamaha and Suzuki (listed alphabetically and not by sales volume) battled it out mainly in the tricycle market but did their respective share of "emotionally charged" products in between.

Today the total industry volume for motorcycles is six times that of cars. In five years we may see the motorcycle factories in Sucat, Batangas and Cebu churning our 1,000,000 motorcycles a year! That is a real cause for concern—and a purpose for Kill Switch. Safety should be a real concern of every motorcyclist.

Sadly, the Philippines lacks facilities for training and licensing for motorcyclists. Years ago there was the Honda Riding Academy (which still continues today). I am a graduate of the course which taught me not only riding skills, but road courtesy and specially safety. Honda should take this riding academy to higher levels, by offering courses to schools. Hint, hint to would be corporate sponsors and government agencies.

Teaching someone how to ride a motorcycle is very different from training a new driver. Most new drivers need to learn how to operate the vehicle, obey the rules of the road and relate to traffic. On the other hand, most beginning motorcycle riders already know how to drive and have experience in the road environment. The bike is a second vehicle, often bought for recreation, and they want to be able to handle it safely.

The Motorcycle Riders Course (check out the Motorcycle Philippines website) seems to be good training for newbie riders and advanced motorcyclists. I have yet to enroll in the program with my son and report back in this column what the Riders Course can deliver. But from the testimonials I have heard so far, the program has achieved recognition for its excellence in content and delivery. Motorcycle enthusiasts not only become safer riders, they also thoroughly enjoy the course.

For anyone who disputes the value of motorcycle riding and training my personal experience is simple—over 16 years of riding and great respect for the bike plus a healthy fear of dying has kept me alive. The bottom line is that there is no substitute for a safety conscious, sober, trained motorcycle rider.

2007 Chrysler Town & Country gets better with time

CHRYSLER TOWN & COUNTRY MINIvan sales increased 25 percent in the United States in 2005. With the Stow 'n Go seating and storage system, the industry's only fold into the floor second- and third-row seats, safety and security features such as a minivan-first inflatable knee blocker, available supplemental three-row side-curtain air bags, a five-star front- and side-impact rating from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), power adjustable pedals and Door Alert, the Chrysler Town & Country minivan offers classy styling with innovative features and flexibility without compromising safety or utility.

"The Chrysler Town & Country minivan has evolved over the years to keep pace with the changing needs of minivan customers," said David Rooney, director-Chrysler marketing. "By designing a vehicle with a refined, athletic style that offers features that customers appreciate and purposeful innovations at an affordable price, the Chrysler Town & Country appeals to customers with a broad variety of lifestyles and needs."

"The 2007 Chrysler Town & Country minivan has an elegant, classic exterior appearance that is welcome at the country club or soccer field," said Joe Dehner, director-exterior design, Chrysler Group. "The tasteful exterior design is coupled with a classy interior or that's ingenious in its flexibility and utility."

The 1989 introduction of a luxury minivan by the Chrysler Group changed the way people thought about a family transportation vehicle. Designed from the inside out with a formula that has proven to be successful over the years, the Chrysler Town & Country, the original luxury minivan, continues to embrace the original minivan formula with some modern enhancements.

Staying true to the original design formula of a "garageable" van with easy entry and exit; chair-height seating; a low, flat floor; and flexible seating options, the 2007 Chrysler Town & Country enhances the original formula with the Stow 'n Go seating and storage system, a plethora of safety and convenience features, and premium amenities that are at home on the soccer field or the country club.

"Our industry-exclusive Stow 'n Go seating and storage system has helped differentiate the Chrysler Town & Country from the competition," said Larry Lyons, vice president- front-wheel-drive product team. "Our engineers did a great job designing a system where both the second- and third-row seats easily fold into the floor without sacrificing style inside the minivan."

Call Chrysler Makati at 815-2222 or Chrysler Greenhills at 723-5808, or visit www.chrysler.com.ph.

SHELL GRANTS ENDOWMENT TO ADMU

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp granted an endowment fund of P1.5 million to Ateneo de Manila University for the establishment of Shell Philippines Endowment Fund to provide scholarship assistance to deserving science majors of the school. As part of the donation, Pilipinas Shell will support the tuition costs of qualified undergraduates enrolled in the School of Science and Engineering. The scholar may enjoy the tuition support for a maximum of 4-5 years, depending on the scholar's science program of study for as long he is able to demonstrate a continuing need for financial support and meets the academic performance requirements.

Shown are Edgar O. Chua, president, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp (second from right) shaking hands with Fr. Bienvenido F. Nebres, SJ, president, Ateneo de Manila University (second from left) after turning over the deed of donation to Ateneo de Manila University. Also shown are Romeo B. De Guzman, Pilipinas Shell vice president for external affairs (right), Miguel Jose C. Valencia, Director, Ateneo Alumni Association (3rd from left), Dr. Ma. Assunta C. Cuyegkeng, vice president for the Loyola Schools (2nd from left), and Fr. Nemesio S. Que, SJ, director, office of admission and aid, Loyola Schools (left).

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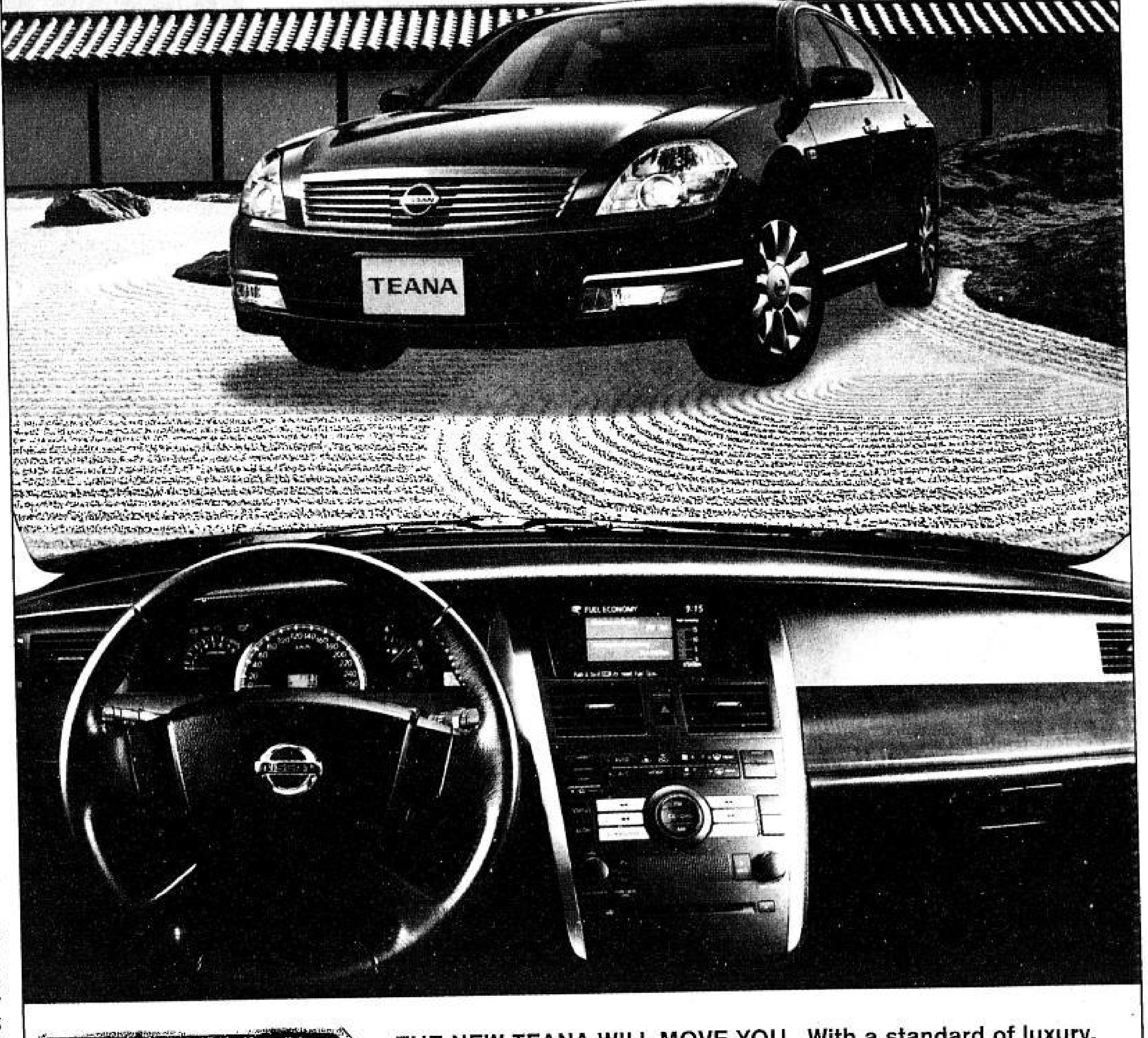

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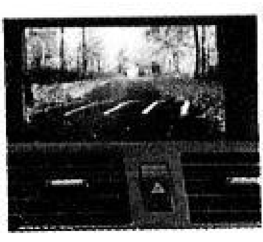

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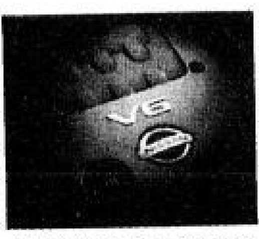

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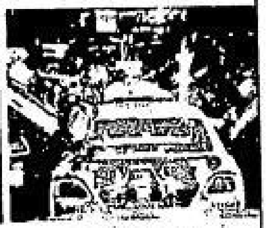

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NISSAN TEST DRIVE

Sinski joins elite circle of racing brands

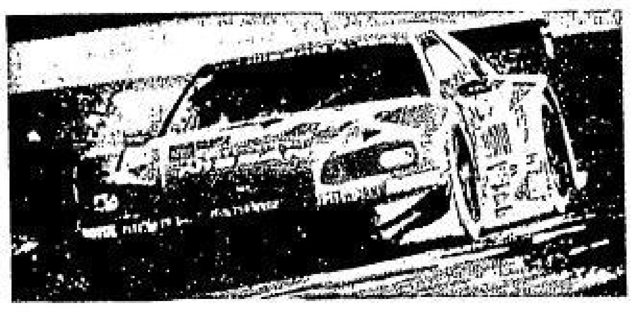
FILIPINOS HAVE AN URGE FOR speed and adventure. Racing is a sport that Filipinos could excel in. Unlike other sports, racing doesn't keep a physical requirement for one to be able to compete. One can test his mettle against challengers whose chances of winning might be equal to his. The unpredictable nature of the sport makes racing even more appealing to Filipino racing enthusiasts. One of the fastest rising sports in the country is the underbone motorcycle racing. The sight of motorcycles weaving in-between moving traffic hypes the adrenaline. This is a gritty sport welcomed in a country where motorcycle is a preferred mode of transport by many. Underbones or underbone motorcycles are a class of small motorcycles (mopeds) that are halfway between true scooters and motorcycles. Underbones are usually built around a singular tube frame, the "underbone" that supports the whole bike. This frame usually runs low across the length of the bike providing for a step through similar to scooters and giving the class its name. Underbones use a chain drive and are ridden like regular motorcycles. In the local racing circuit motorcycles of Japanese brands are preferred. However, there is a need for financing for the aftermarket and tuner parts. Underbones must be modified for racing, increasing the engine power and fine tuning the suspension. Sinski Philippines, provider of world-class, high-quality but affordable motorcycles, has decided to pit its road and race worthiness against other brands. Sinski has taken its commitment to a higher level: the creation of a Sinski Racing team.

NMPI, Autoplus Sportszentrium reveal No. 22 Skyline GT-R

By Giby Yalung
Road Talk contributor

AUTOPLUS SPORTSZENTRIUM, THE Philippines' most popular Race/Tuning firm and exclusive distributor of Motul Oil, with Nissan Motors Philippines Inc, brings to the Philippines the legendary No.22 Motul Pitwork Nismo Skyline GT-R.

For the first time in the Philippines, this Super GT Racing Car will grace our shores and shall be displayed in the upcoming Manila International Auto Show from March 29 to April 1. Such racing technology is supported and designed by no less than Nismo (Nissan Motorsports International), the motorsports and performance division of Nissan Motors Limited.



Known as "Godzilla", the No. 22 racing car is based on the favorite cult racer Nissan Skyline R34, which pumps out a conservative 500 hp to compete in the Super GT and Fuji GT500 series. Such cars can be easily tweaked to go up easily to 1000 horses- the same as the famous Autoplus Racing R34 Skyline that clips the raceway at more than 300 kph.

Sporting an ultra lightweight carbon fiber body, this state-of-the-art purpose-built racing car has gone through intensive research and development.

Just like Motul Oil and Lubricants of France, Autoplus has worked in conjunction with Nismo and Pitcrew of Japan to develop high-performance lubricants that will enhance the technology of the Nissan Skyline's VQ35 twin turbo intercooled V6's high-revving and high-endurance engine. Once properly applied, the special Motul 300 double ester intelligent polymer lubricant bonds to the engine's surface long after even when the engine has been shut off, assuring the Godzilla pitcrew long-term reliability for that winning streak

NMPI senior manager for market and product planning Raymond Tribdino and Autoplus Sportzentrium Motul division head Adrian Baltazar have said that Motul is here to stay and support the efforts of Filipino race car enthusiasts as well as the motoring public.

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